

Imperial Brothers

Valentinian, Valens and the
Disaster at Adrianople

Ian Hughes



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IAN HUGHES



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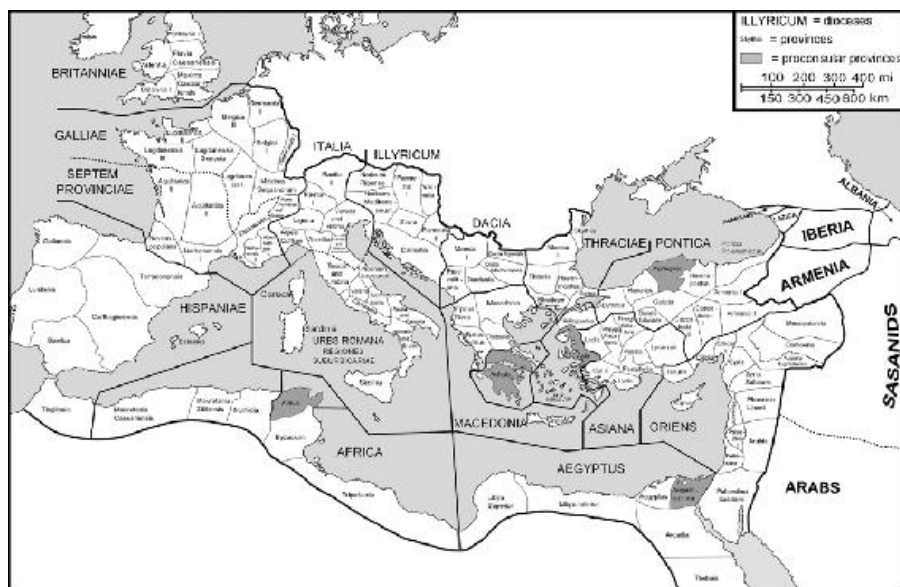
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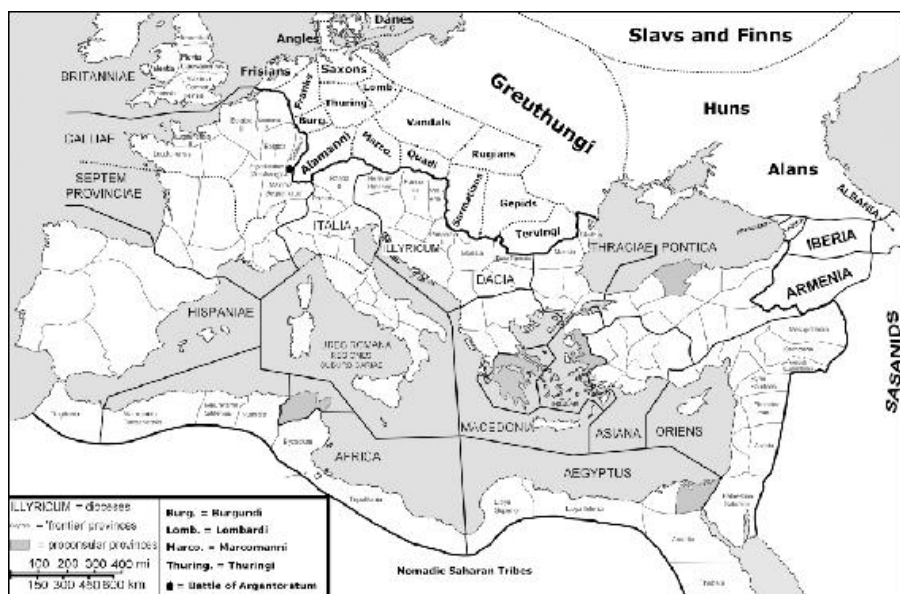
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Introduction

For a variety of reasons the lives of Valentinian I and Valens have been the source of much discussion. The brothers were born in Pannonia, Valentinian in 321 and Valens in 328. As the elder son, Valentinian followed his father into the army, rising to become commander of a unit of imperial bodyguards before being elevated to the position of emperor. Valens was not of military bearing, and so spent his youth learning the art of running the family estates – a skill that would help when it came to the running of the Empire.

Valentinian is usually seen as the last Western Emperor who ruled without interference from his underlings, and who successfully led his armies in person against a variety of barbarian enemies both inside and outside the empire.¹ He is sometimes noted as the last emperor to win a battle across the frontiers in Germania, although this honour should probably be given to his son, Gratian, who in 378 crossed into the territory of the Limigantes and defeated them before heading east to assist his uncle against the Goths. Despite this, Valentinian's reputation as the last great military emperor of the Western Empire is assured.

Valens, on the other hand, has been the cause of a great deal of interest as he is the last emperor not to be a Nicene (Catholic) Christian. Furthermore, during his reign, his own 'brand' of Christianity – Arianism (see below) – was preached to the barbarians, resulting in the later 'invading hordes' being heretical Arians, the foes of the Imperial Catholics.

Yet Valens' greatest 'fame' is that he commanded the Eastern army that was defeated at the Battle of Adrianople in 378. Historically, the battle was seen as one of the major causes of the downfall of the Western Empire, yet in recent times this has been discarded and, although still seen as a serious defeat, the conflict no longer holds the mystique it once did.

Despite re-analysis of the battle, Jones views Valens' reign as a whole still as being 'utterly undistinguished' and full of 'nervous suspicion of plots', yet the same author goes on to note that 'he [Valens] was a conscientious administrator, careful of the interests of the humble [and] was an earnest Christian'.² Given the reappraisal of the battle, it is surprising that no author has yet attempted a re-evaluation of Valens' reign. In large part, this is due to the heavy bias of the sources against the 'heretic' Valens (see below). Even a recent in-depth study of Valens' rule has reached the traditional conclusion that he was a poor emperor, despite listing many of the problems he successfully overcame during his reign and describing the 'perfect storm' of

events that ended his rule.³

Although it is accepted that Valentinian was a ‘good’ emperor and Valens a ‘bad’, it is surprising that little has been written about the two brothers with the exception of scholarly works on specific aspects of Valentinian’s reign and the modern analysis of Valens already mentioned.⁴

This book is an attempt to describe the major events of the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, especially concerning military matters. At the end an attempt will be made to analyze their reigns and come to a balanced conclusion concerning the nature of their rule, judging whether they deserve the reputations handed down by posterity. There will also be an attempt to compare and contrast the fortunes of the two emperors, especially with regard to their reactions to the various problems with which they were faced. Whenever possible, the analyses will rely more on an individual judgement of Valentinian and Valens than on the biased viewpoints preserved in the ancient sources and echoed by the majority of more modern authors. However, it should be noted that it is possible that the same verdict as passed down by history may be reached.

The Sources

One of the reasons for the possibility that a new conclusion may not be reached is because all investigations will be based on the surviving ancient sources, all of which are biased: indeed, part of the reason for Valens’ poor reputation is the prejudice of the ancient writers. The major source is Ammianus Marcellinus, who was critical of both Valentinian and Valens, and the additional surviving writers are almost all Christians writing after the success of Nicene (Catholic) Christianity in overcoming the Arianism espoused by Valens. As a result, Valens is portrayed in extremely negative terms as a persecutor and terror of Catholics.

On the other hand, although the same sources – especially Ammianus – are also critical of Valentinian, the fact that Valentinian led his troops in successful campaigns against a variety of external foes and was a Nicene Christian means that he is perceived in a positive light as the last aggressive Western emperor who ruled in his own right rather than being a figurehead in the hands of senior generals. Obviously, he is also accepted as a ‘good’ ruler by theological sources. The net result is that he is always compared favourably to his brother, whose military ineptitude lost the Battle of Adrianople.

A closer investigation of the sources provides ample evidence for the bias through which modern authors have to work in attempting to reach valid and balanced conclusions.

Ammianus Marcellinus

Ammianus is rightly credited as being a writer of exceptional talent. His surviving works are the major source for the reigns of Valentinian and Valens. However, it should be noted that his portrayal of the brothers is biased due to

Ammianus' allegiance to the Senate of Rome.⁵ Furthermore, it should be remembered at all times that Ammianus was 'not concerned to present a complete or balanced account of an emperor in whom he was interested only as the bane of the Roman elite, the employer of the "good" Count Theodosius and the brother of Valens'.⁶ As a result it is impossible to reconstruct a full narrative of events for all of Valentinian's reign, and especially of the years from 367 onwards, using only Ammianus. Therefore the exact chronology of events is unknown and has to be inferred from a close reading of Ammianus and a comparison with all other extant sources.

De Rebus Bellicis

This is a late fourth- or early fifth-century anonymous treatise on the use of novel 'war machines' by the Roman Army. It definitely dates to after the death of Constantine, but there are few indications within the text of when it was written. It may date to the reigns of Valentinian and Valens and if so it is possible that it informed some of the decisions of either one or both brothers, although it is dubious whether the emperors would use such a text as a decision-making tool. Whether they did or not, it is certain that the text needs to be used with extreme care.

Eunapius

See Zosimus.

Eutropius

Valens' *magister memoriae* ('master of communications and propaganda'), in 369 Eutropius was ordered to write a *Breviaria* ('brief history of Rome') to ready the population of the East for a war with Persia.⁷ Accordingly, the *Breviaria* is ten books of Roman history from the foundation of the city to the accession of Valens focusing on the empire's wars with the Persians. Although useful, it should be noted that the work was aimed at fulfilling a political aim and so needs to be read carefully in order to avoid simply repeating propaganda.

Faustus of Buzanta (Byzantium)

An Armenian historian of the fifth century also known as P'awstos Buzandac'i's or Festus, Faustus wrote a six-volume history of Armenia, of which only the last four volumes survive. He is the main source of events in Armenia during the reigns of Arshak (350–367) and his son Pap (born c.353, ruled 370–374), the contemporaries of Valentinian and Valens. Although his chronology is confused and some aspects of the history are open to question, he is one of the two main sources for events in the East not covered by Ammianus and other Roman sources.

Gregory of Nazianzus

Although Gregory does not write about Valentinian and Valens, his

theological work does much to explain the religious problems faced by the two emperors during their reigns.

Jacob/James of Edessa

A Syriac writer of the seventh and eighth centuries, he wrote a continuation of the *Chronicle of Eusebius*. This can be used to fill some of the gaps left by other writers, as well as helping to establish a chronology for the period.

Jerome

A Church Father and prodigious writer, Jerome wrote a *Chronicle* which, despite several errors, remains a valuable addition to the surviving texts from the period. However, due to the aforementioned errors, the work needs to be used with care.

John of Nikiu

A Coptic bishop in Egypt in the seventh and eighth centuries, John wrote a *Chronicle* which, although focusing mainly on later events – especially the emergence of Islam – contains a few useful references to the fourth century.

Moses Khorenats'i (Moses of Chorene)

An Armenian bishop in the fifth century, Moses wrote a *History of Armenia* which, along with that of Faustus of Buzanta, is a major source for the history of Armenia and the East which is not covered by Roman sources. Although there are chronological and descriptive problems in the work, it remains vital to the study of the East.

Notitia Dignitatum

Compiled sometime around 400, the text – *Register of Dignitaries* – purports to give a list of all of the major dignitaries of the Empire and contains a register of the existing army units, including who commanded them and their deployment. Unfortunately, due to internal problems, plus the fact that the document dates to long after the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, it is not wholly reliable. This hasn't stopped historians attempting to use the *Notitia* as a source for tracing the recruitment and deployment of specific units, although it should be noted that these are speculative and open to different interpretations.

Philostorgius

Born in the mid-fourth century, Philostorgius was an Arian who wrote a history heavily biased towards Arianism in twelve books titled *History of the Church*. Sadly, this has been lost, and only an epitome collated by Photius survives. It is valuable as a balance against the more common Catholic Church histories, but only contains snippets that are useful to the lay historian.

Socrates Scholasticus

Written in the early fifth century, Socrates' *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*Church History*) is important as it not only places the emperor within church affairs, rather than concentrating upon ecclesiastical leaders alone, but also includes information relating to secular history as well as the history of the Church. As a result the book contains much that is important. However, the accuracy of some of the claims is sometimes open to doubt, and so Socrates needs to be compared to other writers whenever possible.

Sozomen

A contemporary of Socrates, although they most likely never met, Sozomen also wrote a *History of the Church* in two books. The first has been lost, but most of the second, covering the Church from the conversion of Constantine (312) to the early fifth century, survives. Sozomen used Socrates' work as the basis for his own. In some cases Sozomen is reliant on Socrates for information, but in others he depends on his own research, meaning that in some cases Sozomen is a valuable adjunct to Socrates. However, the reliance that Sozomen places on Socrates' book dictates that, like Socrates' work, Sozomen needs to be used with caution.

Sulpicius (Sulpitius) Severus

Sulpicius wrote a *Chronicle* of the Christian Church. It is interesting for the glimpse it gives of the complex religious issues at the time of Valentinian and Valens, but is rarely of use for specific events.

Symmachus

The most famous and influential of his family, Symmachus lived throughout the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, composing two (known) panegyrics to Valentinian and one to Gratian. Although a pagan he was loyal in his service to the Christian emperors. His works are valuable, but due to their flattering nature have to be closely assessed before being used by the historian.

Syncellus

A ninth-century chronicler whose works contain snippets concerning events in the mid-late fourth century which, by their nature, contain little that is valuable or trustworthy.

Theodoret

A contemporary of Socrates and Sozomen, he wrote a *Church History* detailing events from the beginnings of Arianism to 429. Although working in the same genre as his two contemporaries, and despite containing information from sources which do not survive, his work is problematic since his chronology is confused and he has a tendency to incorporate 'miraculous narrative', all of which means that any information he includes needs to be carefully scrutinized and, where possible, compared to other sources before being included as historical fact.

Zosimus

A pagan writing probably in the early sixth century who used many sources to collate a *New History* of Rome. His work therefore includes many fragments and excerpts from works that would otherwise have been lost, especially Eunapius. Due to the excerpted nature of his work, Zosimus echoes the biases of his sources, portraying Valentinian as '(naturally) choleric [of] temper to a degree of cruelty, and even to madness' when it came to matters of 'superstition', and Valens as a weak ruler who submitted to the 'least prudent' of his counsellors. As a result, it is necessary to evaluate the biases of both Zosimus and his sources before using his work.

Other sources are used, but these are often fragmentary and contain only minor details which have otherwise been lost. Where necessary their validity and utility will be assessed at the relevant point in the main text.

Conclusion

As can be seen, there are many problems in attempting to create a chronological and unbiased narrative for the reigns of Valentinian and Valens. Yet there is one aspect of many ancient works which has not been covered: the inclusion of 'political intrigue' and 'secret information', none of which would be in the public domain and are therefore of dubious authenticity. Whenever these are encountered a full analysis will be made to determine whether such entries can be trusted or whether it is better to discard them as hearsay.

Spelling and Terminology

To anyone writing about the distant past, the difference in modern and ancient spelling – especially of personal names – can cause severe difficulties. As in my previous books, wherever possible the simplest definitions and spellings have been used throughout the book. In most modern works Roman spellings are usually 'modernized' by removing the common 'us' endings and substituting a modern variant, for example 'Bonifatius' becoming 'Boniface'. On this occasion wherever possible the most common name has been used, but in some cases, for example Terentius (often 'Anglicized' to 'Terence') and Traianus (Trajan), a different variant has been employed in the hope of avoiding confusion.

Again, as in my previous books, tribes from outside the Roman Empire are sometimes labelled as 'barbarian' rather than 'German' or 'Saracen'. Although the word 'barbarian' is now out of fashion, largely due to its negative aspects regarding comparative civilization levels with the Romans, it has been used as it is an otherwise neutral term, whereas the use of the word 'German' often implies 'community and ethnicity on the basis of shared language', and the word 'Saracen' brings to mind peoples of the Islamic faith, and both of these assumptions would be misleading.⁸

Contemporary sources describe the 'Tervingi' and 'Greuthungi'

(sometimes at this early date mistakenly called ‘Visigoths’ and ‘Ostrogoths’ respectively) simply as ‘Goths’.⁹ Interestingly, Ammianus largely begins using the term ‘Goth’ with respect to the Tervingi under Fritigern once they have been joined by the Greuthungi under Alatheus and Saphrax. An attempt has been made in this book to follow Ammianus’ precedent, although it should be noted that at times this has proved confusing and so alternatives have been used where necessary.

Abbreviations

In order to make the references more manageable, the following abbreviations have been used for ancient sources:

Amb. De Ambrosio	<i>De Obitu Theodosii</i>
Amb. De Ambrosio	<i>De Obitu Valentiniani Iunioris</i>
AM	Ammianus Marcellinus
Aug. Ep. Augustini	<i>Contra Epistulam Parmeniani</i>
Aug. c. Aurelianus	<i>Contra Litteras Petiliani</i>
Aur. Victor	Aurelius Victor
Aux.	Auxentius
Bas. Ep. Basil	<i>Epistles</i>
Bas. Caes. Ep.	<i>Ep. of Caesarea, Epistulae</i>
BP	P’awstos Buzandac’i’s (Faustus of Buzanta)
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History
Chron. Chronicon	<i>ad Annum</i>
Chron. Chronicon	<i>Edessenum</i>
Chron. Chronicon	<i>Paschale</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
CJ	<i>Codex Justinianus</i>
Claud. Jul. Augustus	<i>In Rufinus</i>
Coll. Av.	<i>Collectio Avellana</i>
Cons. Consularia	<i>Constantinopolitana</i>
CTh	<i>Codex Theodosianus</i>
DRB	<i>De Rebus Bellicis</i>
Epiph. Epiphanius	<i>Adversus Haereses</i> (aka Panarion/‘medicine-chest’)
Epit. Epitome	<i>de Caesaribus</i>
Eun.	Eunapius of Sardis
Eut.	Eutropius
Greg. Naz.	Gregory Nazianzus
Greg. Nyssa	<i>of Nyssa, Contra Eunomium</i>
Greg. Nyssa	<i>Funeral Oration on Saint Basil</i>
Greg. Nyssa	<i>Vita Sanctae Macrinae</i>
Hist. Adphoria	<i>Acephala of Athanasius</i>
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i>
Isid. His. Goth.	<i>History of the Goths</i>
It. Burdigala	<i>Itinerarium Burdigalense</i>

Itin. Eg *Itinerarium Egeriae*
 Jac. Ed Jacob (James) of Edessa
 Jer. ~~Ch~~ Jerome, *Chronicle*
 Joh. An John of Antioch
 Joh. Ch ~~Joh~~ Chrysostom
 Joh. Mal John Malalas
 Jord. ~~G~~ Jordanes, *Getica*
 Jord. ~~R~~ Jordanes, *Romana*
 Jul. Mis Julian, *Misopogon* ('Beard Hater')
 Lib. *Or* Libanius, *Orationes*
 Marc. c Marcellinus *Comes*
 MX Moses Khorenats'I
 Not. *Di* Notitia *Dignitatum*
 Not. ~~urb~~ *Notitia* *Urbis Constantinopolitanae*
 Oros. Orosius
 Pac. *Pa* Pacatus, *Panegyric*
 Pallad. ~~P~~ Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca*
 Pan. *La* Panegyrici Latini
 Passio ~~St~~ *Passio* of St Saba the Goth
 Phil. Philostorgius
 PLRE Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire
 Ruf. Rufinus
 SHA *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*
 Soc. Socrates Scholasticus
 Soz. Sozomen
 Suid. Suidas
 Symm. ~~S~~ Symmachus, *Orationes*
 Syn. *Ep* Synesius, *Epistles*
 Them. ~~Th~~ Themistius, *Orationes*
 Theod. Theodoret
 Theod. ~~Theod~~ Theodorus Lector, *Epitome*
 Theoph Theophanes
 Veg. Vegetius
 Zach. Zacharias Rhetor/Zacharias of Mytilene
 Zon. Zonaras
 Zos. Zosimus

Chapter 1

Background – Dividing the Empire

In 284 an Illyrian called ‘Diocles’ was proclaimed Emperor of Rome, taking the name Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus Augustus. He is better known to us as Diocletian. In the following year Diocletian divided the Empire, hoping that having two simultaneous ‘rulers’ would stop the tendency for successful generals to rebel. Diocletian himself took the Eastern half of the Empire, whilst Maximian, who Diocletian appointed as *Caesar* (‘junior partner’, ‘heir’), took the West. In 286 Diocletian promoted Maximian to co-emperor.

Seven years later, in 293, Diocletian attempted to solve the persistent dilemma of who should succeed to the throne on the death of an emperor by instigating the ‘Tetrarchy’. In this system, each of the two *Augusti* (emperors) was allocated a *Caesar*, an imperial colleague who would serve under that emperor and inherit the throne once that emperor had died. Diocletian’s *Caesar* was Galerius; Maximian’s was Constantius.

As already noted, the adoption of the Tetrarchic system was almost certainly an attempt to halt the constant cycle of rebellion that had plagued the empire since the early third century. Yet there is another aim that can be easily overlooked: the Tetrarchy attempted to eliminate the lottery of dynastic succession, the system whereby the son of an emperor inherited the empire regardless of his personality or ability. Three centuries of experience had shown that the sons of emperors, brought up at the royal court and subjected to flattery and the exercise of virtually unlimited power, often turned out to be poor rulers, having no sense of duty to the empire or respect for their fellow citizens – especially the Senate of Rome. In the Tetrarchic system, the sons of the Tetrarchs were not automatic candidates to succeed their fathers. Instead, the choice was to fall on the man most capable of ruling effectively. Although a noble ideal, the system was to fail, in large part due to the loyalty of the troops to the sons of their commanders. The dynastic system would prove impossible to break.

Yet at the beginning the system seemed to work. The unending series of usurpations and civil wars slowed, then stopped. Despite this success, in 305, and in an unprecedented move, Diocletian abdicated. Maximian was forced to retire at the same time. Following Diocletian’s plan, Galerius and Constantius were declared emperors. As senior emperor, Galerius had the choice of who was to be promoted to *Caesar*. His choice as *Caesar* for himself was a man

named Maximinus, and as Constantius' *Caesar* one Severus. This was disappointing to Constantius' son, Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus – better known simply as Constantine – who had hoped to be proclaimed *Caesar* to support his father. Escaping from Galerius' court, where he had effectively been held as a hostage, Constantine joined his father in Britain immediately prior to a planned campaign against the Picts by the latter.

This campaign was acclaimed as a success, but shortly afterwards, on 25 July 306, Constantius died. The legions at York instantly proclaimed Constantine as the new emperor. The scene was set for a series of devastating civil wars involving a large number of claimants for the throne. In 312 Constantine defeated Maxentius, his last rival for control of the Western Empire, at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, during the course of which Constantine allegedly claimed that he had received a sign from the Christian God.¹

After the victory over Maxentius, and secure in sole control of the West, Constantine led military campaigns against the Franks and the Alamanni, who had taken advantage of the confusion to raid the provinces of Gaul and Germania. His campaigns were so effective that there was to be peace between the Romans and the Germanic tribes on the River Rhine until the early 350s.

By this time the only surviving contenders for undisputed rule of the Empire were Constantine in the West and Licinius in the East. Surprisingly, in 313 the two emperors made an important announcement: by the Edict of Milan, they declared that everybody in the Empire was free to worship in whichever way they desired, without penalty.

Constantine defeats Licinius

Despite the agreement reached at Milan, tension began to mount between the two *Augusti*. Eventually, in 324, Constantine and Licinius fought a final war. Shortly after his victory at the Battle of Adrianople in July 324 Constantine became sole ruler, founding the Constantinian (Flavian) Dynasty.

As already described, after his earlier victory in the West in the 310s, Constantine had fought a series of campaigns along the Rhine and defeated the Germanic tribes that had been troubling the Empire. In an almost-identical manner, in the 320s and 330s, Constantine was forced to lead a parallel series of military operations against tribes along the Danube. The Sarmatians, Quadi and Marcomanni were defeated, and a major campaign against the Goths, where they were 'trapped into total submission', resulted in the 'Treaty of 332'. After its signing, the area remained peaceful until the late 340s, and the treaty itself was to remain influential for most of the remainder of the century.²

Although the specific details of any of the treaties agreed in the early fourth century are unknown, the overriding impression that is gained is that the

Germanic tribes were reduced to the status of 'semi-subdued' clients.³ As part of the arrangements, it also appears to have been customary for the tribes to agree to supply troops for either specific campaigns or for general service as auxiliaries in the Roman army (a treaty usually known by the Latin term *Foedus*). Although, as noted, few details are given about any of the treaties signed between Rome and the northern 'barbarians', one recurring factor seems to be that when Rome was strong she imposed trading limitations on her northern neighbours. In that way, what trade there was could be taxed, and the emperor could keep control of barbarian traders, who after passing through Roman territory were liable to give vital military intelligence to barbarian kings, who could then decide whether an attack on the Empire was practical.

Despite the existence of treaties, however, the repetitive cycle of frontier war continued along the Rhine and Danube, with the external tribes raiding the Empire when it seemed weak, but becoming more subservient and being reduced to trading with the Empire when it was strong. Yet over time another major issue would prove to be more taxing and impossible to solve for Constantine: religion.

Constantine and Christianity

In 313 Constantine and Licinius had issued the above-mentioned Edict of Milan. This is sometimes interpreted as Constantine giving official sanction to Christianity as the religion of the Empire, but this view is mistaken: although the edict stated that Christians were to be free to practise their religion, it gave the same protection to all other religions. Nevertheless, thanks to the edict, Constantine is celebrated as the first Christian emperor, yet the strength of his beliefs and the date of his 'conversion' are unclear and have been the cause of dispute. It is almost certain that Constantine was true to the Christian religion, largely thanks to the influence of his mother, now known as Saint Helena. Eusebius of Caesarea, historian and Christian polemicist, in his *Life of Constantine* claims that Constantine's father Constantius was also a Christian, although whether this is true is open to doubt.⁴

Whatever his religious leanings, Constantine's political appreciation of the value of Christianity was high. Rather than persecuting the Christians, he realized that their organizational skills could be used to work for him. Furthermore, it is possible that Constantine understood the political implications of using the Christian belief in a single God in his favour: to promote the concept of One God, One (divinely ordained) Emperor. Opinions on this matter vary, however, as this concept was to come to fruition only in later years.

One of the greatest difficulties of using Christianity as a unifying force and as a political tool to impose unity on the Empire was the problem of Christian diversity. Unfortunately, even at the time of Constantine, the Christian Church was split into many different groups:

Epiphanius, towards the end of the fourth century wrote a learned and scholarly work on the heresies, of which he enumerated 60. Philastrius, bishop of Brixia, in a very uncritical summary, brought the total up to 128. Augustine, who used both their books, nevertheless reduced the figure to 87. Theodoret, in a well-informed little treatise, brought down the total still further to 56.^s

Due to the confusion and complexity within Christianity and the Christian Church during the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, it is impossible to cover all of the various sects that existed at this time. Groups as diverse as the Montanists and Pneumatomachists, as well as the ‘semi-Christian’ beliefs such as Gnosticism and Manichaeism, flourished in the fourth century. However, due to their influence on events, it is necessary to give a brief and simplified account of the two groups that opposed the Nicenes and were to have a major influence on the religious and political events during the reigns of Valentinian and Valens. Yet it should be noted that even here there was to be a division between the ‘fundamentalists’, who refused to accept or tolerate other versions of Christianity, and the ‘moderates’, who were willing to co-operate with other branches of Christianity in the hope of forging a unified faith.

The Donatists

On becoming sole Western Emperor in 312 Constantine found that there was religious unrest in the West. The Donatist controversy, which – unusually – was not doctrinal in origin and centred upon Africa and the surrounding provinces, began after Diocletian’s persecutions of Christians (303–305). As part of these persecutions the laws demanded that Christian churches were to be destroyed and the Holy Scriptures were to be handed over and burnt. Some Christians opposed this and were martyred. Others, including bishops, appear to have handed over the books, and even have denounced fellow Christians to the authorities. These individuals were given the name *traditor* (betrayers, traitors, those who ‘handed over’).

When the persecutions relaxed after Diocletian’s abdication in 305, the Christians resumed their worship. However, questions were raised as to whether bishops who were *traditors* should be allowed to continue in their roles, especially with regard to the elevation of new bishops, a process in which *traditors* were very much involved. Opinion was now split between whether these new appointments were valid. Those who called themselves Donatists (named after Bishop Donatus Magnus) believed that they were not, as bishops who were *traditors* had by their actions lost the right to take part in appointments. In 313 a Christian commission found against the Donatists. The Donatists dismissed this, claiming that they were the true Church, and that the Catholic Church was false. Fortunately for Constantine and the Church, Donatism remained a geographical – African – dispute.

Arrianism: The Question of *Anomoios* and the Division of Christianity

Strangely, in yet another parallel to his earlier conquest of the West, after his conquest of the East in 324 Constantine was to be faced with another religious dilemma. Although he had not taken the lead in the earlier, Western, Donatist dispute, in 325 Constantine intervened personally in the greatest Eastern Christian controversy of the time when he convened the First Council of Nicaea. The Council was summoned in order to bring unity to the Christian Church over a divisive question related to the nature of Christ. The majority view was that Jesus was *homooúsios* (of the same essence/substance) as God, and so must have existed with God, and was without beginning (eternal). Theologically, this belief is enshrined in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), found today in all 'mainstream' Christianity but perceived mainly as the mainstay of the Catholic Church.

However, an alternative teaching was propounded by one Arius, in 313 presbyter of the Baucalis district in Alexandria. Arius, converted to a different belief, began preaching that Jesus was *anomoios* (not equal to God). His 'Unitarian' ('God alone') message was that Jesus, the Son, was inferior to God, standing midway between God and life on earth. God alone was without beginning (unoriginate), but Jesus was born (originate), and so once had not existed. Although not founded by Arius, his belief is now known as Arianism.⁶

Although Arius had gained a following, an earlier synod in Alexandria (called in 321 when Licinius ruled the East) had condemned Arius and he had been excommunicated. He had fled to Palestine. However, in 325 he was summoned to Nicaea in order to present his case. He failed to convince the Council and was banished into Illyricum. He died in 336, probably aged over eighty. Yet his followers refused to accept the decision of the Council and continued to preach his doctrine. Despite remaining strong in the East, the teachings of Arius, taught in Greek and largely using Greek philosophy as its base, failed to make any impact in the West, where Nicene Catholicism remained the dominant form of Christianity. However, as a result of the division, in many cases the bishops of East and West regarded each other as heretics, a factor which helped to foster a spirit of division between the respective halves of the Empire.⁷

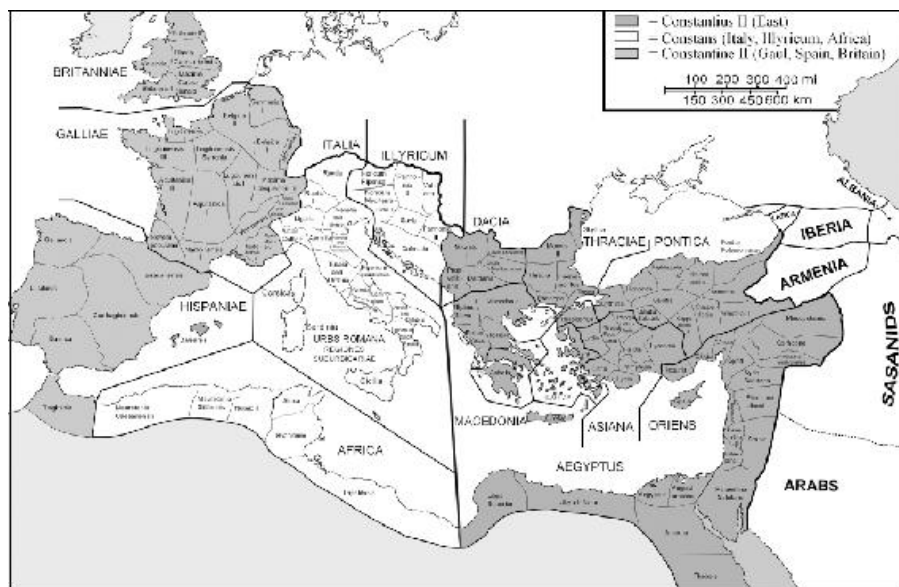
After Constantine

Constantine ruled for a further thirteen years after his victory over Licinius. Although the empire remained strong under his sole rule, things did not run smoothly after his death in 337. Constantine had three confusingly named sons, as was the wont of the family naming tradition. Flavius Claudius Constantinus, Flavius Julius Constantius and Flavius Julius Constans are now better known as the emperors Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans. In a bid to remove potential rivals, the three brothers arranged for almost all of their male cousins to be killed.⁸

They then partitioned the empire (see Map 3). Constantine II took Gaul, Britain and Spain, whilst Constans took Italy, Africa and Illyricum. They also trod in their father's footsteps as followers of the Catholic Nicene creed (Christians who accepted the findings of the Council of Nicaea).

Constantius II took the East. Inheriting the Arian problem, he appears to have adopted a pro-Arian policy at first, although this was later tempered and reduced to a 'semi-Arian' policy of toleration in order to reduce tension in the East.⁹ His Arian tendencies would have drastic repercussions for his successors.

In retrospect, the division of the Empire into three may have been the best possible solution to the Empire's military problems. There were three main borders where outside pressure was to manifest itself throughout the long life of the Empire: Persia in the east, the barbarian tribes along the Danube and the Germanic tribes along the Rhine. By dividing the empire as they did, the sons of Constantine accidentally found the perfect solution to the problem of how to defend the frontiers: Constantius II was free to face the Persians, Constans was in a position to defend the Danube and Constantine II could focus his attention on the Rhine. In theory, the Empire was now at its most defensible, thanks to the care taken over the succession and the division of the empire by the three brothers.



Map 3. The Division of the Empire under Constantine II, Constans, and Constantius II.

Yet the fact that the solution was arrived at by accident shows that the siblings did not appreciate their good fortune. Despite their precautions, tensions rose between Constantine II and Constans, until in 340 Constantine II invaded Italy. However, he was killed, and Constans assumed the rule of the

whole of the Western Empire. This rule was not destined to last. His policies and behaviour alienated the West, and in early 350 the Gallic general Magnentius rebelled and Constans, having lost support, fled. Constans was caught and killed, allegedly by assassins sent by Magnentius.¹⁰ Magnentius was now Western Emperor.

Young Valentinian

Throughout all of these complex wars and political convulsions a young man named Valentinian had been growing up in Pannonia. Aurelius Victor claims that Valentinian:

was seemly in countenance, clever in character, serious in mind, most cultivated in conversation, although a man of few words, stern, vehement, tainted by faults, and most of all that of greed, of which he was a keen lover ... he was a most elegant painter, had a most powerful memory, reflected upon new weapons, fashioned images by means of wax or clay, made prudent use of places, times, and conversation.

Aurelius Victor 45.5

Valentinian appears to have had a traditional upbringing, studying, reading, writing and the military art. He may also have had childhood lessons in painting and modelling, but it should be noted that his artistic side may only have been developed later as an adult.

In his youth his status and family connections may have given Valentinian access to service in the imperial guard units. Indeed, he may have been a member of the *protector domesticus* (household guard), serving under the eyes of the emperor himself, although this is uncertain. Possibly in the 320s but more likely in the 330s, when Valentinian was in his early teens, he had accompanied his father Gratian when he was *comes Africae* (Count of Africa).¹¹ This may have been on imperial orders to further his military education. Having spent a considerable time in Africa, Gratian was sent to Britain as *comes Britanniarum* (Count of Britain). The posting may have been associated with Constans' campaign in the island in 343. With the island pacified, Gratian appears to have remained in Britain in a senior post for a long time.¹²

With the troubles in Britain quelled, Gratian eventually returned home to live quietly on his estates in Cibalae. Now at least in his early twenties, Valentinian continued to serve in the army, although the details have been lost. It is most likely that, with Britain at peace, he served along the Rhine or Danube frontiers, although certainty is impossible. The sparse evidence suggests that at some point before 350 he was serving either on the Danubian frontier or in the East.¹³

Constantius, Magnentius and Gratian

Despite the fact that it was Constans' own failings that had encouraged rebellion, Constantius could not allow Magnentius' usurpation to succeed. He gathered his forces, appointed his 'half-first cousin', Gallus, as *Caesar* in the East, and led his army west.¹⁴ At the Battle of Mursa in 351 Constantius defeated Magnentius. Magnentius fought on, but, defeated at the Battle of Mons Seleucus in 353, he decided that his cause was lost and committed suicide.

The brief rule of Magnentius damaged Gratian's reputation and standing with Constantius. Gratian was accused of offering hospitality to Magnentius during the rebellion, and his property was confiscated.¹⁵ Surprisingly, Valentinian appears to have been untainted by his father's alleged treasonous acts. It was common for families to be purged because of the crimes of one member, but Valentinian was spared the ordeal. Valentinian's activities during the revolt are unknown. It appears reasonable to assume that, since his father was punished for allegedly supporting Magnentius, the fact that Valentinian remained free and unpunished suggests that he had been deployed in the East or on the Danube and so been far away and detached from events, and that he had remained loyal to Constantius. In fact, the evidence points to Valentinian serving in the East during this difficult time, as demonstrated by the next episode in his life.

Chapter 2

Rise to Power

Constantius was now in control of the whole empire once again. However, with the war over, he discovered that Gallus had shown himself incapable of sensible rule. He needed to act. Gallus' supporters were removed from power before Gallus himself was arrested and executed. Constantius' last remaining male relative was Julian, the half-brother of Gallus. Constantius was unwilling to risk promoting Julian to *Caesar*, instead appointing a man named Silvanus as *magister militum* (Master of the Troops) in Gaul. However, the policy backfired when, after a series of political manoeuvres against him, Silvanus raised the standard of revolt in 355. Although the revolt was short, the increasing confusion within the empire resulted in widespread disorder along the northern border, with the tribes along the Rhine and Danube raiding the empire. The ever-increasing tensions convinced Constantius that he could not rule alone. In desperation, he turned to Julian, who was appointed *Caesar* and given military authority in Gaul.

Army Command

The Roman military hierarchy and methods of promotion seem strange in the present day. It is extremely unusual in modern warfare for a commander of proven ability or loyalty but of low rank to be promoted to a post where he commands officers of nominally senior rank to himself. This was not the case in the Roman Empire. In a world of endemic rebellion, loyalty was probably prized above competence, as a result of which able military commanders were passed over for men whose loyalty to the emperor was proven, whatever their military ability.

One result of the system was that promotion often depended upon the whim of the emperor, so that generals seen as being too successful could easily be removed or even executed by a jealous ruler. Further, unscrupulous commanders and politicians could manipulate emperors who were fearful of rebellion by falsifying evidence proving that an individual was intent on revolting, as happened to Silvanus. The upshot was that poor generals could be retained in command, despite their incompetence, and that successful commanders could be demoted, dismissed or even executed with little or no evidence apart from accusations.

The Army¹

From at least the mid-third century the Roman army was the subject of many reforms, the major overhaul being taken during the reigns of Diocletian (284–305) and Constantine I (306–337). The evidence is sparse, fragmentary and open to interpretation, not least because it is likely that the ‘reorganization’ was not uniform across the Empire. It would appear that many of the older units either retained their original strength or remained larger than the newer units being formed as part of Diocletian’s enlargement of the army.

By the reigns of Valentinian and Valens the army was divided into two separate sections: the *Limitanei*, or frontier troops, and the *Comitatenses*, or field armies.² In addition there were a few units of *Scholae* (‘Guards’) theoretically in perpetual attendance on the emperor. However, partly due to manpower shortages, a third category came into existence: the *Pseudocomitatenses*, units from the frontiers that were seconded into the field armies to boost numbers.

The main sources for the army remain archaeology and the *Notitia Dignitatum*. The problems arising from the *Notitia* are outlined in the introduction, but in this context it is important to note that the document was created in the late-fourth century, shortly after the conclusion of a series of costly civil wars between the East and the West. As a result, although it is hypothetically possible to use the *Notitia* as a source for this earlier period, a large amount of deduction is needed for events and changes occurring between the beginning of the reign of Constantine I and the end of the reign of Theodosius I. Obviously, there is no guarantee that these conclusions accurately represent the actualities of the mid-late fourth century.

As a result, what follows is a list of theoretical unit strengths only. Furthermore, although they may be reasonably accurate, it should also be noted that these represent paper strengths and do not reflect the loss of manpower due, for example, to desertion, injury or illness. Furthermore, a recurring theme throughout this book is the lack of manpower faced by the emperors – especially Valens in the East – so it is likely that many of the units deployed by the emperors were vastly under strength.

Unit Manpower (After Nicasio)

‘Guard’/‘Field’ Units		‘Border’ Units	
<i>Scholae/Cavalry</i>	500	<i>Cavalry</i>	350
<i>Legiones</i>	1,000	<i>Legiones</i>	3,000
<i>Auxilia Palatinae</i>	800	<i>Auxilia/other Infantry</i>	300

Conclusion

Modern descriptions of the Roman army and its commanders still sometimes use modern ranks and unit formations as analogies. The description above proves that in the best-case scenarios this is misleading, but in the worst simply mistaken. In modern armies, promotion is either through the ranks or

via training at a military academy. In all cases appointments tend to be made through seniority within the ranks and dismissal is usually only the result of gross negligence, military failure or illegal activity. In the Roman Empire, promotion was likely to be the result of patronage, personal influence or on the whim of an individual emperor. Similarly, dismissal from a senior post could be the result of the same factors, as well as incompetence or defeat in battle. Furthermore, the lack of a strict method of promotion resulted in political intrigues amongst the top generals and politicians aimed at discrediting the opposition and promoting either oneself or a patron or client. This explains the multitude of promotions and demotions, and explains why so many successful generals were either executed or felt that they had no choice but to rebel or be executed due to the manoeuvrings of their opponents.

Furthermore, there are few – if any – descriptions of battles which contain estimates of the numbers of troops present. Where these do occur, the numbers appear to be grossly exaggerated for propaganda purposes, with enemy numbers highly inflated and one's own forces described as being significantly inferior in order to highlight the superior generalship on display. Even where lists of troops are given, thanks to the confusion surrounding unit strengths it is still difficult to estimate with any accuracy the number of men being deployed. All of these factors need to be remembered when reading about ancient battles.

The Dynastic Principle

Although the appointment of Julian can be seen as a panic measure, in reality it was the result of the long history of Imperial rule: the empire, and especially the army, liked to have a dynasty to which they could pledge their allegiance. This began as far back as the assassination of Julius Caesar. His (adopted) son Octavian used the loyalty of his father's troops as a weapon with which to become the first emperor. From then on, the Empire had been run by many dynasties, the more successful ones being those who managed to gain the loyalty and trust of the troops, especially the Julio-Claudians (27 BC-AD 68) and the Severans (AD 193-235).

The advantages of establishing a dynasty were overwhelming. It would ensure the succession of the emperor's son(s), or at least his near family. It would also provide a focus for the loyalty of the troops, minimizing the temptation of the army to elect a usurper and ensuring political stability by maintaining a 'continuity of patronage'.³

On the other hand (and apart from the problem of a son being – or not – a suitable successor to his father, as discussed in Chapter 1), dynastic rule was a double-edged sword. As Constantius was discovering, offshoots of the main line could easily provide alternative candidates for the throne to anyone willing to take the risk of acclaiming a rival family member as emperor. This was the reason why Constantine's sons had eliminated the majority of their male relatives who could possibly be classed as imperial candidates.

After the revolt of Silvanus, Constantius was unwilling to trust a non-family member with command in Gaul. This only left Julian. Reluctantly – especially in the knowledge that many of Julian’s family had been executed on his orders – Constantius had acted.

Julian the *Caesar*

In 355 Julian was sent to the West as *Caesar* to take control of the situation in Gaul. Yet Constantius did not fully trust his new appointee. Beset by doubts, he sent a contingent of troops under the command of the *magister peditum* (Commander of the Infantry), Barbatio, to ‘reinforce’ Julian, as well as to keep his relative under close scrutiny. Probably ordered by Julian to serve as part of Barbatio’s force was Valentinian, tribune of a unit of light cavalry, almost certainly the *Equites Cornuti*.⁴

As Julian travelled West, Constantius dealt with the disturbances along the Danube, interfering in local Germanic politics and promoting pro-Roman leaders whenever possible. Under increased Roman pressure, and with Constantius present to give instant responses to requests, Rome gradually reasserted control and tension eased along the Danubian frontier.

In Gaul Julian proved unexpectedly competent as a general. He defeated the Franks before, in the summer of 357, Barbatio and his forces were sent to ambush a raiding force of Laeti (a Germanic tribe) who had attacked Lyons. The ambush failed, allegedly due to the treachery of Barbatio, who was intent upon undermining Julian’s reputation in the hope of raising himself higher in the regime. In this Barbatio was supported by his colleague, Cella.⁵ Barbatio, in a report to Constantius, placed the blame for the failed attack firmly on Valentinian and his fellow commanders, and by inference upon Julian, since they had been acting upon Julian’s orders.⁶

As the report travelled east, in late summer – probably in August – Valentinian took part in the successful Battle of Argentoratum (Strasbourg). Shortly after the battle messengers arrived from Constantius, dismissing Valentinian from his post due to his ‘failure’ against the Laeti.⁷ Valentinian returned home.⁸ Not long after his return, in either April or May 359, his first son, named Gratian after Valentinian’s father, was born in Sirmium to his wife Marina Severa.⁹ Whilst in Pannonia, Valentinian was determined to make up for lost time. His service in the army had limited his ability to socialize in the manner expected of a high-ranking individual in his home province, and he fully immersed himself in contemporary society, making the acquaintance of many local dignitaries, civilian and military alike.¹⁰

In the meantime, Julian maintained the pressure on the tribes along the Rhine and his campaigns proved effective: over a two-year period the area was brought back under imperial control.¹¹ The barbarians were cowed into submission, or at least were afraid of his military abilities and refrained from attacking the empire. The restoration of the West seemed to be complete.

Fortunately for Valentinian, in 359 all of Barbatio’s schemes were

unmasked, and Barbatio was exposed as having plans to become Emperor. He and his wife were executed.¹² With Valentinian's reputation restored, Constantius recalled him to service.¹³ In winter 359 Valentinian was sent to Mesopotamia, where the Persian Emperor Shapur II had invaded.¹⁴

Constantius against Julian

In 360 the war with Persia began to escalate and Constantius sent messengers demanding reinforcements from Julian in Gaul. Unfortunately, the orders were sent directly to unit commanders, bypassing Julian. When the troops learnt of the orders, they rebelled, acclaiming Julian as *Augustus*. Although the troops had acclaimed Julian so in 357, on the earlier occasion he had declined to take the throne. This time, the troops refused to take no for an answer, and Julian was made emperor, equal of Constantius.

There was little Constantius could do as he was fighting the Persians in the East. Finally, Constantius had a stroke of luck: in 361 the Persians were unwilling to attack as the omens were against them and they eventually retired from the frontier without a fight.¹⁵ Constantine moved his forces west and prepared to face Julian.

It is again unclear what action Constantius took with regard to Valentinian. Valentinian's earlier connections with Julian may have resulted in Constantius dismissing Valentinian; as a senior officer Valentinian would be well placed to undermine the loyalty of Constantius' troops should Valentinian decide to support Julian. On the other hand, it is more likely that Valentinian was left in command of the Persian frontier in case the Persians had a change of heart and attacked. From his position far in the east, Valentinian would have little influence on events in the West.

Constantius now set out for Pannonia, where he was confident of defeating Julian in battle. He was doomed never to arrive at his destination. In late September/early October 361 he arrived at Tarsus, where he first showed the signs of a slight fever. He marched on to Mobsucrenae, at the foot of Mount Taurus, where his illness forced him to stop. The fever increased, and on 5 October 361 Constantius died, after allegedly nominating Julian as his successor.¹⁶

Julian the Apostate

Once established as sole emperor, Julian made a fateful decision, which has resounded through the centuries. Unlike the rest of the Constantinian dynasty, who were Christian, Julian found himself drawn to the old, traditional Roman gods, although he appears to have envisioned a structured 'pagan church' similar in organization to that used by Christians.¹⁷ He quickly revoked the laws banning sacrifice, re-opened the Pagan temples, and abolished the privileges which had accrued to the Christian Church in the preceding decades. Yet he was criticized by moderate pagans when he forbade Christians being teachers of grammar and rhetoric.

As the new, sole emperor Julian needed to establish a reputation with the

Eastern army to ensure its loyalty. This may have been one of the main reasons for his next decision: he determined that the best way to establish his authority and gain their allegiance was to win a major war. Consequently, although the Persians were now attempting to secure peace, Julian was intent upon continuing to fight and decided to invade and defeat Sasanid Persia. For this he would need all of the available manpower.

Valentinian

At this point the sources concerning Valentinian become confused. Ammianus, Philostorgius, the *Chronicon Paschale* and Sozomen share one basic common story, claiming that Valentinian was dismissed whilst serving in the West. Yet the details of the stories are contradictory.

Ammianus states that Valentinian was in command of a cavalry unit under the *magister peditum* Barbatio when he was disgraced and cashiered by Constantius:

[All of the enemy were killed except those] who made their way undisturbed past the rampart of Barbatio; being allowed so to slip by because Bainobaudes, the tribune, and Valentinian, afterwards emperor, who with the cavalry troops they commanded had been ordered to attend to that matter, were forbidden by Cella ... to watch the road over which they were informed that the Germans would return. [Barbatio later] deceived Constantius in his report and pretended that these same tribunes had come, under the pretext of public business, to tamper with the soldiers whom he had been commanding; and for that reason they were cashiered and returned to their homes in a private capacity.

AM 16.11.6

On the other hand, Philostorgius states that Valentinian was in command of the Cornuti when he was dismissed by Julian:

The Apostate [Julian] did everything possible to make Valentinian, an officer who had charge of a military unit, abandon his faith (he held the rank of count of the so-called Cornuti), but when he failed he stripped him of his rank and banished him to Thebes in Egypt.

Philostorgius 7.7

The *Chronicon Paschale* also maintains that Valentinian was in control of the Cornuti and implies that he was dismissed by Julian:

Among these Valentinian also, who was at that time a tribune of a brigade in the so-called cohort of the Cornuti, distinguished himself in confession of Christ. For not only did he scorn his rank, but even when subjected to exile he endured nobly and eagerly.

Chron. Pasch. s.a. 363

In contrast, Sozomen declares that Valentinian was in command of the Ioviani when dismissed by Julian:

When Julian was in Gaul, he went one day to a temple to offer incense. Valentinian accompanied him, according to an ancient Roman law, which still prevails, and which enacted that the leader of the Jovians and the Herculeans ... should always attend the emperor as his bodyguard. When they were about to enter the temple, the priest, in accordance with the pagan custom, sprinkled water upon them with the branch of a tree. A drop fell upon the robe of Valentinian: he scarcely could restrain himself, for he was a Christian, and he rebuked his asperser; it is even said that he cut off, in view of the emperor, the portion of the garment on which the water had fallen, and flung it from him.

Soz. 6.6

In analyzing these sources, it is better to deal with them in two distinct divisions. Temporarily leaving aside Sozomen, it is possible to combine the details given by Philostorgius and the *Chronicon Paschale* with those of Ammianus. Dealing first with Philostorgius and the *Chronicon Paschale*, it is commonly accepted that the ‘Cornuti’ commanded by Valentinian were the same as the ‘Cornuti’ listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum* as part of the *auxilia palatina*.¹⁸ Obviously, this clashes with the claim by Ammianus that Valentinian was a cavalry commander. Fortunately, there is a solution to the problem. In the *Notitia Dignitatum* there are two cavalry units of the *Equites Palatina*, the *Equites Cornuti seniors* and *Equites Cornuti iuniores*.¹⁹ It would appear that Ammianus, Philostorgius and the *Chronicon Paschale* are actually giving the same information: before and during the Battle of Strasbourg Valentinian was in command of the *Equites Cornuti*, a cavalry unit serving under the command of the *magister peditum* Barbatio.²⁰

If this theory is correct, there only remains the confusion surrounding Sozomen’s claim that Valentinian was commanding the *Ioviani* in Gaul when he was dismissed. This is, of course, impossible. The *Ioviani* were one of the elite infantry regiments in the Roman army and served directly under the emperor. The concept that these were serving under the *Caesar* Julian in Gaul in 357 is undoubtedly wrong. They can only have entered Julian’s service after the death of Constantius in 361.

Sozomen’s confusion is simple to explain. He knew that Valentinian had been discharged whilst serving in Gaul, but did not know the circumstances surrounding the event. He also knew that Valentinian was commanding the *Ioviani* when Julian dismissed him. Accordingly, Sozomen mistakenly assumed that Julian must have dismissed Valentinian whilst commanding the *Ioviani* in Gaul.

This hypothesis is confirmed by other evidence from Sozomen’s account. It is clear that Valentinian could only have been in command of the *Ioviani* after

361, once Julian had become sole emperor and assumed command of the Ioviani. The dating of Valentinian's dismissal is reinforced by the claim in Sozomen that it was due to Valentinian's Christianity. It is only after Constantius' death and Julian's assumption of sole rule that Julian felt secure enough to renounce Christianity and declare himself a Pagan. We can therefore assume that the story reported by Sozomen belongs to after Constantius' death and Julian's declaration of his own Paganism.

The analysis shows that Valentinian must have been dismissed from military command twice in his career. The first time was during Julian's campaigns in Gaul in 357–358, brought about by the machinations of Barbatio. The second time was in 362 whilst Valentinian was serving Julian in the East and was brought about by Valentinian's apparent refusal to renounce his Christianity and accept Paganism.

With the confusion surrounding the accounts cleared, it is possible to describe events in the East. Upon Julian's assumption of sole rule, he prepared his army to invade Persia. Julian was aware of both the reason behind Valentinian's earlier fall from military command in the West and of his military ability. As a reward for his conduct in the west, possibly during the Battle of Strasbourg, and possibly also out of respect for Gratian, Valentinian's father, Julian promoted Valentinian to command of the Ioviani, one of the two senior *legiones palatinae* (the other being the Herculiani).²¹

Valentinian's reinstatement was not to last long. Shortly after assuming sole control Julian openly declared himself a follower of the old Roman gods, re-opening the temples that had been closed and announcing freedom of worship.²² Unfortunately for Valentinian, this freedom seems not to have applied to the officials and commanders surrounding the emperor himself.²³ At a religious ceremony which Valentinian was forced to attend as leader of the Ioviani, he was sprinkled with 'unholy' water and openly declared himself a devout Christian. Unwilling to allow this example of insubordination – let alone the rebuttal of his Gods – to stand, Julian banished Valentinian.

Although the sources disagree on his place of banishment, this is probably due to Valentinian not actually being 'banished' in the traditional sense.²⁴ It is most likely that he was sent to command a remote outpost, relieving the standing commander of his duties and allowing him to replace Valentinian in the field army for the invasion of Persia. He probably began by being sent to Egyptian Thebes, but after a short period he was then transferred to Melitine in Armenia.²⁵ It is feasible, although impossible to prove, that Julian ordered Valentinian to Melitine so that, if necessary, he could quickly be restored to a command within the field army should Julian need his military expertise on the eastern frontier.

The Persian Campaign

Once he had gathered his forces, and with Valentinian in 'exile', in March 363 Julian led his army into Persia. The first part of the campaign was a

success. Julian reached the gates of Ctesiphon, the Persian capital, but was convinced by his generals that he could not successfully lay siege to the city. Instead, he decided to lead his army deeper into Persia, burning the Roman fleet carrying supplies which had followed the army down the Euphrates. However, shortly afterwards he changed his mind, and in June Julian gave the orders to retreat northwards towards Corduene. As they retreated the army was repeatedly attacked by the Persians, who made excellent use of their highly mobile horse archers. In one of these skirmishes Julian was badly wounded. Although doctors attempted to save him, three days later, on 26 June 363, he died.²⁶

Jovian

The Roman army, however, was still in enemy territory. On the following day there was a debate about who should be the new emperor.²⁷ The army leaders quickly divided into two groups. One group was led by Arintheus and Victor, who had served under Constantius II. The other was led by Nevitta and Dagalaifus, who had served under Julian in Gaul. Eventually, the choice fell upon Saturninus Secundus Salutius, the *Praefectus praetorio Orientis* (Praetorian Prefect of the East). He was a Gaul and the decision to offer him the throne may have been a sign of Nevitta and Dagalaifus slightly gaining the upper hand, although the choice is interpreted by Ammianus as being a 'compromise'. However, Salutius declined due to old age and ill health.²⁸

Whilst the debate continued, the soldiers decided to take matters into their own hands and proclaimed Jovian, *primicerius domesticorum* (a senior officer) of the *Protectores Domestici* (Imperial Guard), as the new emperor.²⁹ Jovian's appointment followed the traditional manner of selecting emperors that had begun in the mid-third century: he was the son of Varronianus, who had been a respected officer who had now retired;³⁰ he had served as 'Protector';³¹ and he was an Illyrian.³²

Interestingly, Julian had allegedly promised his relative Procopius (whose mother was the aunt of Julian³³) that he would adopt Procopius as his heir.³⁴ When Jovian was acclaimed as Emperor, Procopius yielded his claim.³⁵

With matters settled Jovian continued the retreat, but when the army reached Dura it was pinned by the Persians against the River Tigris. Unable to escape, Jovian was forced to enter peace negotiations with the Persians. Their terms were crushing: Rome was to return control of the five provinces (Arzanena, Moxoeona, Zabdicena, Rehimena and Corduena) conquered by Galerius in 298 to the Persians; the important cities of Nisibis and Singara, along with fifteen important fortresses, were to be surrendered on the condition of the safe passage of their inhabitants; the city of Castra Maurorum, along with its citizens, was also to be surrendered; but most damaging of all, the Romans were forced to renounce their claim to 'control' of the Kingdom of Armenia. A major bone of contention between the two empires, Armenia was currently ruled by a Christian king, Arshak II, who was

allied to the Romans. The Romans were forced to relinquish the alliance, and part of Armenia was ceded to Persia, partly as punishment for Arshak, who had supported the Roman invasion (see Map 7). The treaty was to last for thirty years.³⁶

At last the army was allowed to retire to Nisibis, where in a humiliating ceremony the city was handed over to the Persians. The Antiochenes lampooned the new emperor and his army.³⁷ In the meantime, Jovian had sent messengers abroad in a propaganda campaign to place the defeat in the best light possible. However, when news of the treaty became widespread, it quickly became clear that the treaty was extremely unpopular. Jovian's chances of retaining his position appeared to be rapidly fading.

Valentinian

It took Jovian some time to settle affairs with the Persians in the East. Once this had been accomplished, he made an effort to secure his position as emperor. He appointed his father-in-law Lucillianus, a Pannonian, as *magister equitum et peditum* (Master of the Cavalry and Infantry) and ordered him to travel to Milan. Once there, Lucillianus was ordered to proclaim that Julian was dead and that Jovian was the new emperor.³⁸ Lucillianus chose the newly returned Valentinian as one of his companions for the task: Valentinian's time spent building his contacts in Pannonia during his first period out of command appeared to have been time well spent.³⁹

However, things now went awry. Jovian's candidate as *magister armorum per Gallias* (Master of the Troops/Cavalry in Gaul) turned down the appointment.⁴⁰ Lucillianus moved to Rheims, possibly intent on maintaining order in Gaul in person. Here Lucillianus began an enquiry into the actions of an *exactuarius* (tax collector). The *exactuarius*, whose name is unknown, fled to the troops and raised the rumour that Julian was still alive. Thinking that Jovian was a usurper, the troops rebelled and killed Lucillianus. Valentinian only escaped thanks to the protection of his host in the city, Primitivius.⁴¹ Shortly afterwards other troops arrived announcing their loyalty to Jovian and confirming Julian's death. Valentinian's safety was assured.

Apart from signing the treaty with the Persians and attempting to secure his throne, Jovian made one other important move. At some time either in August or September 363 he ordered the restoration of Christianity.⁴² This was to have repercussions almost immediately. With the decisions made, Jovian split the army. Procopius took the larger part of the army and the body of Julian to Tarsus, where Julian's body was buried.⁴³ Jovian, with the remainder of the army, travelled to Antioch. Here, there were three contenders for the bishopric; two of these, Paulinus and Meletius, were Nicenes. The third, Euzoius, was an Arian.⁴⁴ After a short period of confusion, Paulinus was declared Bishop of Antioch. Jovian had publicly announced his Orthodoxy.

In late October Jovian left Antioch and headed towards Constantinople. He was joined at Tyana by Valentinian, who informed him that although some of

the men to whom he had offered senior posts in his new regime had declined the honour, others had accepted posts.⁴⁵ There was now a good chance that he would be accepted as emperor upon reaching the capital. Possibly as a reward for his loyalty and service, as well as his military experience, Jovian made him commander of the *Schola Secunda Scutariorum*, an elite military unit. The appointment reflected Jovian's trust in Valentinian.⁴⁶

Towards the end of December Jovian and his entourage reached Ancyra. The party stopped and on 1 January 364 Jovian and his baby son Varronianus (named after Jovian's father) were installed as the consuls for the new year. Valentinian was now ordered to remain with his unit in the city, possibly as the standing garrison.

The main part of the army was ordered to continue the journey at the normal pace whilst Jovian hurried ahead to secure the throne in Constantinople.⁴⁷ He was never to arrive in the capital. On 17 February 364, after a reign of eight months, he was found dead in his quarters at Dadastana in Asia Minor, on the boundary of Bithynia and Galatia.⁴⁸ The cause of his death is unknown, but it may have been caused by either overeating, by eating poisonous mushrooms, or by suffocation due to a charcoal brazier leaching fumes from fresh paint in his bedroom.⁴⁹ For the second time in less than a year, Rome was in need of a new emperor.

By this time the main army, following in Jovian's tracks, had reached Nicaea, where it stopped upon hearing the news of his death. A meeting of both civil and military officials was arranged and an attempt made to agree upon a new emperor. At least two names were proposed: Equitius, a military tribune of the *Schola Prima Scutariorum*, was deemed to be too 'boorish';⁵⁰ Januarius, a relative of Jovian in charge of the commissary department in Illyricum, was deemed to be too far away.⁵¹ It is possible that Saturninus Secundus Salutius was again asked to take the throne and again refused, but as this is only attested by Zosimus, it must remain open to doubt.⁵² Eventually, they chose the commander of the *Schola Secunda Scutariorum*, who had been left behind in Ancyra, although this would mean that the empire was without an emperor for ten days as messengers carried news of his elevation and he returned in person to accept the crown (see Map 4).⁵³ Valentinian was to be the new emperor and upon receiving the news he immediately began his journey to join the army in Nicaea.

Valentinian the Emperor

Valentinian arrived at Nicaea on 24 February 364. Unfortunately, the following day was the bisextile (leap day): in the Roman calendar the leap year was accounted for by adding an extra day in February, in the same way as the modern Gregorian calendar. However, the earlier Julian calendar had the extra day added to the day after the Feast of Terminalia. The feast day was 23 February, meaning that the 24 February was counted twice in a Leap Year. This day was thought of as a day of ill omens by the Romans, and so not used

for special events. Furthermore, the leap day was a holiday, and it could cause unrest amongst the troops and the civil functionaries if the first act of the new emperor was to disrupt this. Valentinian decided to wait a day before accepting the throne.

In the meantime, Valentinian was doubtless informed of the details of the debate in which he had been chosen emperor. It would appear that the *patricius* Datianus, along with the generals Arintheus and Dagalaifus, had supported his appointment, but that the first proposal had actually been made by Sallustius.⁵⁴ As a thank you, Valentinian sent orders to Rome to erect a statue dedicated to Sallustius in the city.⁵⁵

Finally, on 25 February 364, the day after the bisextile, Valentinian was presented to the troops and accepted their acclamation.⁵⁶ As the ceremony neared its conclusion, Valentinian prepared to make the traditional speech, the *adlocutio*, during which he would announce the traditional accession donative of one gold solidus and a pound of silver to each of the troops.⁵⁷ However, as he began his speech the soldiers 'made a loud noise and all the common maniples clashed their shields and all the common soldiers persistently urged that a second emperor at once be named'.⁵⁸

According to Ammianus, Valentinian now made a speech in which he accepted that the empire needed two rulers 'with equal powers'. He also noted that the man chosen needed to be one who Valentinian trusted, and so asked the troops for time in which to make the correct choice. The troops were willing to wait and the ceremony closed.⁵⁹

Even before the ceremony it was clear to Valentinian that he needed to appoint a co-ruler. For most of the century it had been the norm to have more than one 'ruler', whether a second (or third) *Augustus* or an *Augustus* with a *Caesar*. One side effect of this practice was that there were now two distinct courts and bureaucracies, one for the West and one for the East. Amalgamating the courts would mean that many powerful individuals would lose their jobs.

In addition, Valentinian knew that a military presence was needed in the East to restrict the actions of the Persians following their victory. The theatre would need an emperor able to make instant decisions rather than waiting for questions to be referred to a higher authority, as delay could be interpreted as weakness by the Persians. Yet an emperor was also needed in the West. Julian's acclamation had been caused by the unhappiness of the Western troops with having an 'Eastern' emperor: although elevated in 360, the Western army had attempted to acclaim Julian as emperor in 357, demonstrating that they were unhappy at being left without their own emperor.

Valentinian knew that his position wasn't secure: he was a 'compromise emperor' and couldn't afford to upset the political balance.⁶⁰ He needed to be wary. The decision now was who to choose. From his actions, it is clear that Valentinian had already made up his mind, but as yet did not have enough

confidence in his position simply to state it. He gave orders that the army was to march to Nicomedia in two days' time before summoning his civil and military leaders to a conference. At the meeting he asked for advice on whom to choose. After a pause in which nobody spoke, Dagalaifus eventually broke the silence and told Valentinian: 'if you love your relatives ... you have a brother; if it is the state that you love, seek out another'.⁶¹

At this early stage it was clear to everybody that Valentinian wanted his brother as co-emperor, although it was also clear that Valens had shown none of the skills necessary for him to succeed as an emperor. Yet the choice made sense: Valentinian needed a co-emperor that he could trust, who would be willing and content to work as a junior partner, and who would be easy for Valentinian to control. Just as importantly, the appointment of Valens would help establish a family dynasty.

Furthermore, Valentinian obviously was worried about the prospect of a civil war if he made the wrong choice. Not appointing Valens would leave Valens as a possible rival candidate, whether willing or unwilling, who could be elevated to emperor by court officials or army officers at any time. Despite his concerns, the meeting broke up without a decision being made, and on 27 February the army marched to Nicomedia (see Map 4).

Young Valens

Like Valentinian, Valens was born in Cibalae in Pannonia.⁶² Seven years younger than his brother, he was born in late summer 328.⁶³ Unlike Valentinian, or his father Gratian, Valens was not suited physically to the military life, as although his body was 'well-knit' he was pot-bellied, knock-kneed and had a bad eye – possibly a cataract.⁶⁴

Thanks to his physical problems, Valens was destined, probably at his father's choice, to stay at home and run the family estates. Thanks to this, he was 'trained neither in the art of war nor in liberal studies'.⁶⁵ Possibly whilst still a civilian Valens was married to a woman called Domnica, daughter of a soldier called Petronius, although the date of the marriage is unknown and could have been any time prior to 364.⁶⁶

However, Valens was unable to avoid military service forever. It is likely that he was recruited into the army in 359,⁶⁷ at which time Constantius was recruiting heavily in preparation for a campaign against the Persians. Yet it would appear that, using his connections, Valens' father Gratian was able to secure a place as a '*protector domesticus*' for his son.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, his time in the army was undistinguished, and a contemporary assessment of his military capabilities was not favourable.⁶⁹

After Constantius' death, Valens continued to serve as a *protector* until 362. At this time the number of *protectores* was cut back by Julian and Valens was one of those reduced to serving in a less-distinguished unit. Valens' dismissal is sometimes ascribed to Valens emulating Valentinian and refusing to relinquish his Christian faith. This is unlikely. It is more probable that it

was a by-product of Valentinian's refusal: with Valentinian dismissed for refusing to give up his Christianity, and Julian looking to reduce the number of *protectores*, Valentinian's brother Valens was an obvious candidate for dismissal, as he too was probably seen as being suspect due to Valentinian's refusal to convert.

Valens was not demobilized and sent back to Sirmium but continued to serve with the army, although his position at this time is unknown.⁷⁰ When Valentinian was proclaimed emperor in February 364 Valens appears to have been stationed nearby in Nicomedia. With his brother as emperor, Valens' future as a high-ranking member of the aristocracy seemed assured.

Valentinian and Valens

Valentinian and the army arrived in Nicomedia. Shortly after their arrival, on 1 March, Valentinian appointed Valens as *tribunus stabuli* (Tribune of the Imperial Stables, responsible for the acquisition and supply of horses to the army).⁷¹ This need not necessarily lead to a further promotion: such promotions generally simply acknowledged the service and loyalty of the holder. With the appointment concluded, Valentinian and the army headed to Constantinople.

It is clear from later events that Valentinian had already made up his mind about who he wanted as co-emperor. Knowing the necessity for co-operation between the two *Augusti*, on 28 March Valentinian joined the army at the Hebdomon, also known as 'Septimum' (Seven), a suburb of Constantinople seven miles from the city.⁷² This was the place where the army was able to gather and exercise, as there was a large training area known as the *Campus Tribunalis* (Field of the Tribunes, the equivalent for Constantinople of the *Campus Martius* [Field of Mars] in Rome). In a simple ceremony Valens was crowned *Augustus* before the two emperors rode back to the city in the Imperial chariot, thereby emphasizing their unity and co-operation.⁷³

Chapter 3

The New Emperors

Arriving back in Constantinople, the two emperors were at last able to draw breath and catch up with events in the empire. One of the first items demanding their attention was what action to take regarding Varronian, baby son and ‘colleague’ of Jovian. Surprisingly, there is no direct evidence regarding Varronian’s fate: this has to be inferred from two other pieces of information. The first concerns Charito, wife of Jovian and mother of Varronian.¹ According to Zonaras, she was buried near to her husband in the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople.² This suggests that she and her son were treated with some dignity by the new regime. The only other possible mention is a letter written by John Chrysostom around AD 380: ‘While of those who still survive one, who has an orphan son, is trembling with alarm lest any of those who are in power dreading what may happen in the future should destroy him.’ The most plausible candidates for this comment are Charito and Varronian.³ This implies that Charito and Varronian outlived both Valentinian and Valens, and that c.380 Charito was living in fear as she did not know how the regime that had succeeded Valentinian and Valens would treat her. Although tentative, the evidence suggests that Valentinian and Valens began their reign with an act of clemency.

Even before this decision had been made, there had been the arrival in Constantinople of many embassies, from both within and outside the empire, congratulating the new emperor Valentinian on his elevation and with some of them giving him the customary *aurum coronarium* (crown/coronation gold: a ‘tax’ paid to a newly crowned emperor). Although many of these embassies had been expecting to meet Jovian, they had failed to reach him before his death. The instant income will have been welcome to Valentinian and Valens: although Valentinian appears to have begun his reign by remitting a portion of the taxes due – no doubt in the hope of encouraging loyalty to the new regime – he was quickly informed that the empire was close to bankruptcy.⁴ In his short reign Jovian had realized this and had begun to pass laws attempting to remedy the situation.⁵ The onus was now on Valentinian and Valens to bring the empire back from the brink of financial meltdown.

However, before the emperors could do anything, they caught a fever. This lingered for a time, but once they had recovered they ordered Ursacius, *magister officiorum* (Master of Offices), and Viventius, *quaestor sacri palatii* (Quaestor of the Sacred Palace, concerned with the drafting of laws), to

investigate claims that the illness had been caused by sorcery.⁶ The claims proved to be groundless, although Zosimus alleges that Salutius, the Praetorian Prefect, helped to allay Valentinian's fears and stop the investigation.⁷

Recovering their health, the new emperors began to secure their rule. Although much has been written regarding their political reliance on men from Pannonia and upon Valens' apparent adherence to Arianism, detailed analysis of the initial stages of their rule makes it clear that regime was to be dominated by expediency, rather than any overriding political or religious dogma.⁸

Religion

The religious policy of the two emperors, and especially of Valens, has often been used against them. Valentinian's apparent indifference to religious disputes resulted in the continuation of the Donatist controversy in Africa, although it should be noted that elsewhere in the West his religious tolerance was helped by the fact that the majority of the Western Church had accepted the Orthodox, Nicene formula, meaning that Valentinian had little to worry about with regards to religion. In fact, Valentinian had little to do with religion, apart from immediately repealing the law passed by Julian banning Christian teachers from teaching.⁹ The only other surviving law that he passed with regard to matters of faith was one which 'guaranteed freedom of worship, so long as this was not misused in order to damage the State'.¹⁰

In religious matters Valentinian can be classed as being extremely fortunate. Since its official 'acceptance' by Constantine in the early fourth century, the Church and its officials had 'quickly amassed an enormous amount of capital and enjoyed huge tax privileges: as a result, in many areas they exercised an influence that locally could be comparable with the power of the local representatives of the emperor'.¹¹ Despite the resurrection of Paganism by Julian, the Church remained a powerful force in local politics. Valentinian was to benefit from its unity in the West.

In direct contrast, Valens in the East had inherited a Church rent by internal divisions, the main one being that between those who followed the Nicene formula and those who rejected it in favour of Arianism.¹² Unlike Valentinian, Valens chose to follow the Arian religion of Constantius II, under whom he had begun his career, but followed the decision to adopt a pragmatic approach: anything else would have instantly revived the previous controversies, with their divisive effects on the East (for example the dispute over the bishopric of Antioch during the brief reign of Jovian, when in 363 Jovian had adjudicated in favour of the Orthodox Paulinus and against the Arian Euzoïus).¹³ In the first years of his reign Valens did not take a 'hard-line' stance on religion, preferring to let local populations make their own choices and accepting both Arian and Nicene appointees to high religious office.

Unfortunately, his decision not to support the Orthodox Church was to have repercussions for his reputation with later historians. He was followed as emperor by Theodosius I (the Great), a devout follower of the Nicene Creed. Under Theodosius' regime Nicene Church historians began a hostile campaign aimed at degrading Valens' character. Writers such as Sozomen and Socrates accused Valens of launching 'persecutions' against Orthodox leaders, so contrasting his 'disastrous' rule against that of his 'successful', 'Catholic' successor Theodosius, and to a large degree this has been accepted by more modern historians.¹⁴ However, recent analyses of these texts and comparisons with other histories, such as that written by Philostorgius, have demonstrated that the early 'persecutions' were largely a figment of the imagination. Valens did not persecute 'Catholics': instead, he tended to remove individuals from power who voiced opinions likely to cause unrest in the East, so breaking the Imperial laws on freedom of religion mentioned above.¹⁵ During the first years of Valens' reign religion would play a surprisingly small role in Valens' decisions, with those laws that were passed being only reactive rather than proactive.¹⁶

The Bureaucracy and the Army

Valentinian and Valens were determined that they would use the best men available for each task that arose, although some favour was given to trusted candidates from Pannonia. Consequently, the majority of the consulships during their reigns would be given to military men, whereas the majority of Prefects would be appointed from a pool of 'long-serving bureaucrats'.¹⁷ Their decisions and appointments would be made solely with the aim of establishing their rule and maintaining the *status quo*. Furthermore, it is probably at the inauguration of their reigns that the practice of having separate archives within each Prefecture, recording the laws passed with reference to that Prefecture, began.¹⁸

With the aim of serving the Empire in mind, Valentinian and Valens began issuing laws aimed at securing the loyalty of the troops and at addressing the poor state of the treasury.¹⁹ Leaving Constantinople, they set off on a slow progression through the Balkans. By 13 May they were at Adrianople, where they issued laws aimed at recruiting and supplying troops.²⁰ From there, they moved to Philippopolis, reaching the city by 25 May.²¹

Stopping at Bona Mansio on 1 June, the two emperors reached Naissus (Nis) by 2 June, from where they issued a number of decrees.²² At the same time, they agreed on how to divide the accompanying army. This was the force, combined from the troops of both East and West, which Julian had led against Persia in 363. Since then, the army had remained united during the slow return from the east, first with Jovian and then Valentinian, until the arrival at Constantinople. The army was still together because Valentinian was uncertain of how his elevation would be received in the West. By retaining control of the single most powerful army in the empire, he knew that

other generals would be very unlikely to rebel in the face of such overwhelming power. However, there now appeared to be little danger of a rebellion, so the two emperors went to a suburb called Mediana and divided the troops between them.²³

Earlier in the century, Julian's elevation as *Augustus* had owed much to the fact that his men had not wanted to transfer to the East to support Constantius during his war with Persia. Not wishing to risk a repetition of the revolt, the two emperors wisely divided the army along existing East–West lines. They also divided the army commanders. Jovinus, the Western *magister equitum* (Master of the Cavalry), and Dagalaifus, previously *magister equitum* but now made *magister peditum*, were to serve in the West.²⁴ Lupicinus, who had previously served Constantius II – although he had since been serving in the West – was made Eastern *magister equitum*, and Equitius (called Aequitius by Ammianus) was transferred from being *tribunus scholae primae scutariorum* (commander of the 'First Shieldbearers', a guards unit) to become *comes rei militaris per Illyricum* (commander of the troops in Illyricum).²⁵ Serenianus, a Pannonian who had previously been *dux Phoenices* (Duke of the 'Phoenicians') and had loyally served Constantius, was recalled from retirement and made *comes domesticorum* (count of the domestics), effectively in command of Valens' bodyguard, no doubt to act as military advisor to the relatively inexperienced Valens.²⁶

With the decision made, in mid-July the imperial entourage moved to Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovika).²⁷ With the division of the army already in place, the two emperors now debated how to divide the empire itself. Informing the decision on how to make the partition was the military and economic status of the empire.

The Division of the Empire

It was the military aspects of the problem that decided which half of the Empire the emperors would receive. Reading Ammianus, it is easy to conclude that Valentinian, with his military experience and competence, was needed in the West in order to defeat the multiple invasions that were in process:

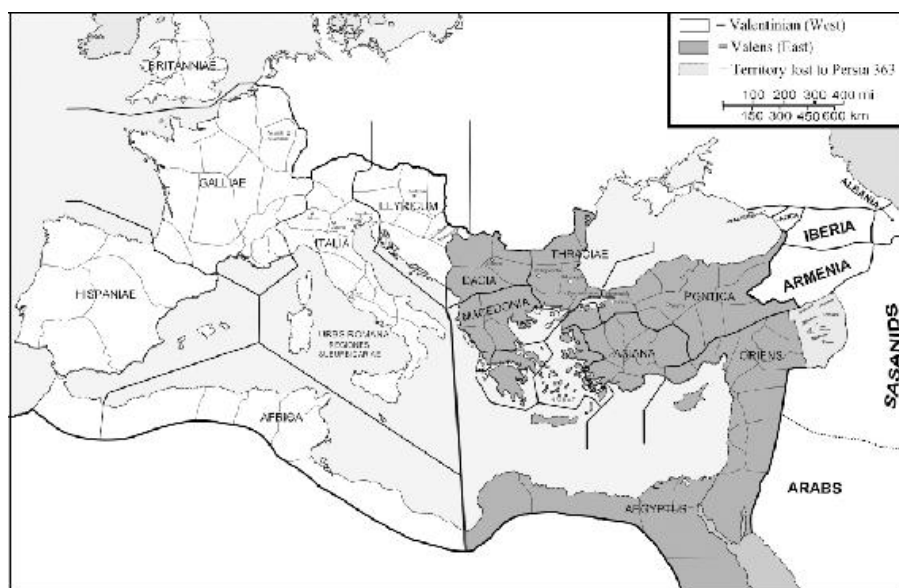
At this time, as if trumpets were sounding the war-note throughout the whole Roman world, the most savage peoples roused themselves and poured across the nearest frontiers. At the same time the Alamanni were devastating Gaul and Raetia, the Sarmatae and Quadi Pannonia, while the Picts, Saxons, Scots and Attacotti were harassing the Britons with constant disasters. The Austeriani and other Moorish tribes raided Africa more fiercely than ever and predatory bands of Goths were plundering Thrace and Pannonia. The king of the Persians was laying hands on Armenia, hastening with mighty efforts to bring that country again under his sway, under the false pretext that after the death of Jovian, with whom he

had concluded a treaty of peace, nothing ought to prevent his recovery of what he claimed had formerly belonged to his forefathers.

Ammianus Marcellinus 26.4.5–6

The impression that the West was under attack on various fronts in 364 is, however, mistaken: Ammianus is listing the wars that took place throughout the reigns of Valentinian and Valens.²⁸ Yet if this is the case, there is a need to explain why Valentinian, the soldier, took control of the West when he may have been expected to take the East, ready to campaign against the victorious Persians in order to minimize the damage caused by Jovian's treaty.

One reason for Valentinian's choice of the West is internal politics. Valentinian was known as a military leader, and if Valentinian had taken control of the East he would doubtless be expected to emulate Julian's invasion of Persia to negate the shameful treaty imposed upon Jovian by Shapur II. Failure to do so would result in his actions being seen as a sign of weakness and cowardice. Just as importantly, his presence in the East would doubtless have been interpreted by Shapur as an aggressive move, leading to an increased risk of a Persian pre-emptive strike.



Map 4. The Division of the Empire between Valentinian and Valens.

With both internal and external expectations, Valentinian's arrival on the Eastern frontier would almost certainly have precipitated another war with Persia. However, the empire had neither the troops nor the resources – especially financially (see below) – to launch another invasion of Persia: the peace treaty with the Persians was still in force, and Valentinian had no desire

to jeopardize the Eastern frontier until long after he had secured his position on the throne.²⁹

Accordingly, as the senior emperor, Valentinian made his decision and took control of the West, namely Illyricum, Italia, Gallia, Britannia, Hispania and Africa. These regions were in turn divided into two Prefectures, 'Galliarum' (the 'Gauls', namely Gaul, Britain and Spain) and 'Italia, Africa et Illyricum'. Valentinian's reign therefore became important historically, as it was to be the last time in the history of the Empire that the West took precedence over the East.³⁰

Valens lacked military experience, but although the eastern frontier was tense, the peace with Persia was holding and military action was not expected. Valens, however, was an excellent administrator – at least of the family estates – and his organizational skills were needed in the East, especially with regard to re-organizing the Eastern provinces after the loss of territory to the Persians. So, Valens took Thracia, Bithynia, Oriens, Aegyptus and 'Libya Cyrenaica', all combined under the Prefecture named Orientis ('East').³¹

Although obviously unknown at the time, the division of the Empire by Valentinian and Valens was to be a pivotal moment in the history of the Roman Empire: 'After 364 no Western emperor ever again exercised practical jurisdiction in the East, and apart from Theodosius I ... briefly ... no Eastern emperor ever again governed directly in the West.'³² Furthermore, their decision as to where to divide the empire was to govern the relations between East and West in the future, especially with reference to whether Illyricum and its recruiting grounds should belong to the East or the West.³³ The division was also to mark a watershed in bureaucratic deployment for the rest of the Empire. Although there are a few exceptions, in general it would now become the norm for bureaucratic – and military – careers to focus on one half of the Empire.³⁴

It may seem strange that the two emperors took so long to partition the empire along what appears to be the traditional divide, but it is thought that at least part of the reason why they waited until they had reached Sirmium before taking action was so that they could recruit trusted friends and relatives from their home province, giving these men senior positions of power in the bureaucracy.³⁵ In this way, they could limit the chance of rebellion against their as-yet-insecure rule. Consequently, it was now that Valentinian and Valens divided the bureaucrats between them.³⁶ However, it should be noted that although the two emperors made many appointments from Pannonia, these only formed the nucleus: the extent of the support they gained from Pannonia should not be exaggerated.³⁷ They also employed many non-Pannonians, in this way extending their influence across a wider section of the ruling elite and so stabilizing their rule. With the division of the Empire agreed, there remained one outstanding difficulty for the two emperors to resolve.

Finances

As noted earlier, economically the empire was in poor condition. In an attempt to restore Paganism, the Emperor Julian (360–363) had cut tributes in order to make his regime popular and had restored Pagan temples and their lands to the priests. Since these lands had been attached to the crown, their loss, coupled with the remissions in taxes, had vastly reduced imperial income.

To exacerbate the financial problems, Julian had mobilized a vast force for the invasion of Persia. Assembling at Antioch, he had paused and celebrated many Pagan rituals. The ensuing spending on ‘ceremonial rites’ was criticized by Ammianus.³⁸ To make matters worse, the army’s demand for food had combined with local droughts to cause the city’s grain supplies to run out, creating a crisis in the city. Julian had spent freely in order to rectify the problem, further diminishing the imperial coffers.³⁹

As a final blow, Julian had promised the troops donatives during the course of the invasion in order to maintain morale. Obviously, these had not been paid before his death, although the troops still expected the money. Even Ammianus, who admired Julian, was forced to admit – although obliquely – that Julian’s financial policies and the invasion of Persia had damaged the empire.⁴⁰

Ironically, Jovian’s accession had made matters worse. The crowning of a new emperor was the occasion for the traditional donative to the troops, but – again – this had not been paid when Jovian died. The new emperors already owed the troops a lot of money. Nor was that the end of their financial troubles. When Valentinian and Valens were crowned the troops expected yet another series of donatives. The total cost of these donatives would have exceeded 80,000 pounds of gold and 1,000,000 pounds of silver, money that the empire simply did not have.⁴¹ The problem would hang over the emperors for a long time: it would take over two years for them to finish paying the troops their promised bonuses.⁴²

Knowing that they would have to take drastic measures to alleviate the economic problems, by at the latest mid-August the two emperors separated and travelled to the cities they had each chosen as their capitals for the remainder of the year.⁴³ They would never see each other again.

The Emperors Separate

Leaving Sirmium, Valentinian travelled to Aquileia.⁴⁴ Here he began the task of bringing the finances of the empire under control, for example passing a law tightening control of crown estates and enforcing accurate tax collection.⁴⁵ He also appears to have been approached by an embassy from the province of Byzacium in Africa, as he was forced to pass laws regulating the growing problem of rich citizens entering the church to avoid their civil obligations in the provinces.⁴⁶

Valentinian then moved via Altinum and Verona to Rome, arriving at the

eternal city by the end of October.⁴⁷ Finally, he moved on to Milan, the city he had chosen as his capital, reaching the city by at the latest 25 November.⁴⁸ Valentinian settled in Milan for the remainder of the year.

In the meantime, Valens returned to Constantinople, probably with less ceremonial extravagance, since he travelled via the same cities that the two emperors had used on their outward journey. Entering Constantinople before the end of September, Valens gave a speech to the Senate.⁴⁹ On the following day Themistius gave an oration to the new emperor, emphasizing the unity of the empire and the concord of the two emperors.⁵⁰ Once the formalities were over, Valens settled down to await the New Year.⁵¹

With the two emperors in their respective capitals throughout December, they were able to accelerate the overhaul of the empire that was so desperately needed. Amidst a series of laws concerning the supplies of bread and the actions of the troops is one which stands out as of vital importance. On 23 December, in Milan, Valentinian issued the decree that began the restoration of the imperial finances: he ordered that the property given to the Pagan temples by Julian in the latter's attempt to restore Paganism was to be returned to the control of the Imperial Treasury.⁵²

The New Year⁵³

With the coming of 365 the emperors entered their first joint consulship and, in Constantinople, as part of the ceremony Themistius gave a second oration to Valens.⁵⁴ In the meantime, the legislative workload of the emperors remained high.⁵⁵ In amongst the laws concerning the raising and collection of taxes, appeals and the status of bread makers is one attesting to bad news concerning Africa. In 363, with Julian and then Jovian trapped with the army in Persia, the Ausrorians, a Moorish tribe, had attacked Tripolitania.⁵⁶ With the empire being perceived as weak, tribes on the borders were beginning to probe its defences.

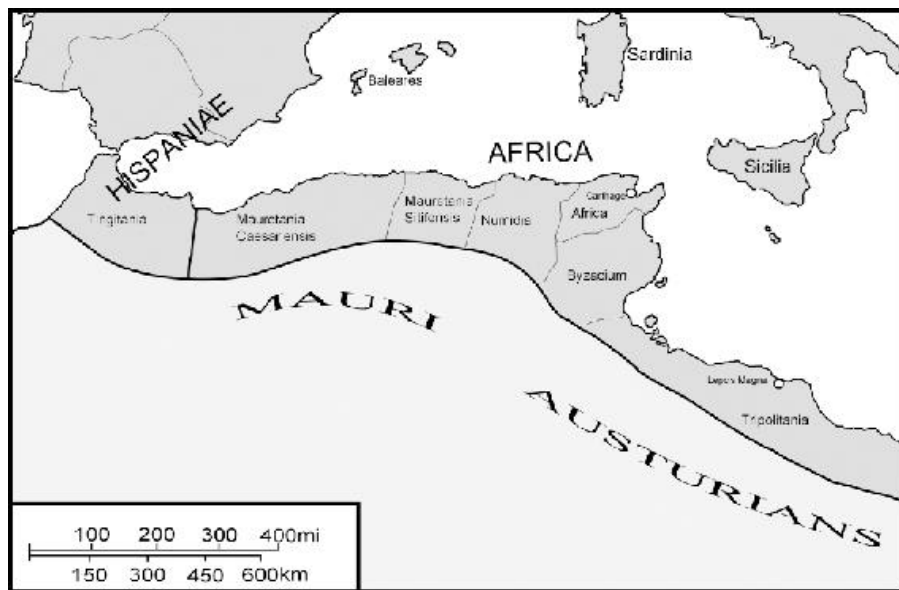
THE WEST⁵⁷

Africa

The Ausrorians had already attacked Tripolitania as early as 363. Romanus, the *comes per Africam* (Count of Africa), had demanded that the citizens of Lepcis Magna provide supplies for his men when they campaigned against the Ausrorians. When the supplies had not been provided, Romanus instead had spent forty idle days in the province.⁵⁸ Outraged, the citizens sent envoys to Valentinian, but these were deflected by Remigius, the *magister officiorum* (Master of Offices), a friend and colleague of Romanus.⁵⁹ To make matters worse, Romanus allegedly persecuted the Donatists, helping to sow discord and disunity amongst the African provinces just as pressure on them was beginning to grow.⁶⁰ The move would have dire consequences in the coming years.

In the meantime, buoyed by the inactivity of the Roman army, the

Austorians attacked for a second time, almost certainly in 364.⁶¹ When news of the second attack reached Valentinian, he was outraged: as part of their attack the Austorians appear to have used information gathered from inside informants. On 4 February 365 a law was passed condemning informers in Africa to execution for their crimes.⁶²



Map 5. Africa.

Valentinian now ordered an inquiry into the invasions, appointing the *tribunus et notarius* (tribune and secretary) Palladius to the task. Palladius was sent to Africa, along with the pay for the troops, suggesting that this may have been in arrears and that Valentinian was hoping that after receiving their wages the troops would perform well against the Austorians.⁶³

In 365 the Austorians attacked yet again, but the inhabitants will have hoped for support from the newly arrived Palladius. It was not to be forthcoming. Romanus was able to blackmail Palladius into supporting his position, and Palladius returned to court exonerating Romanus from all charges.

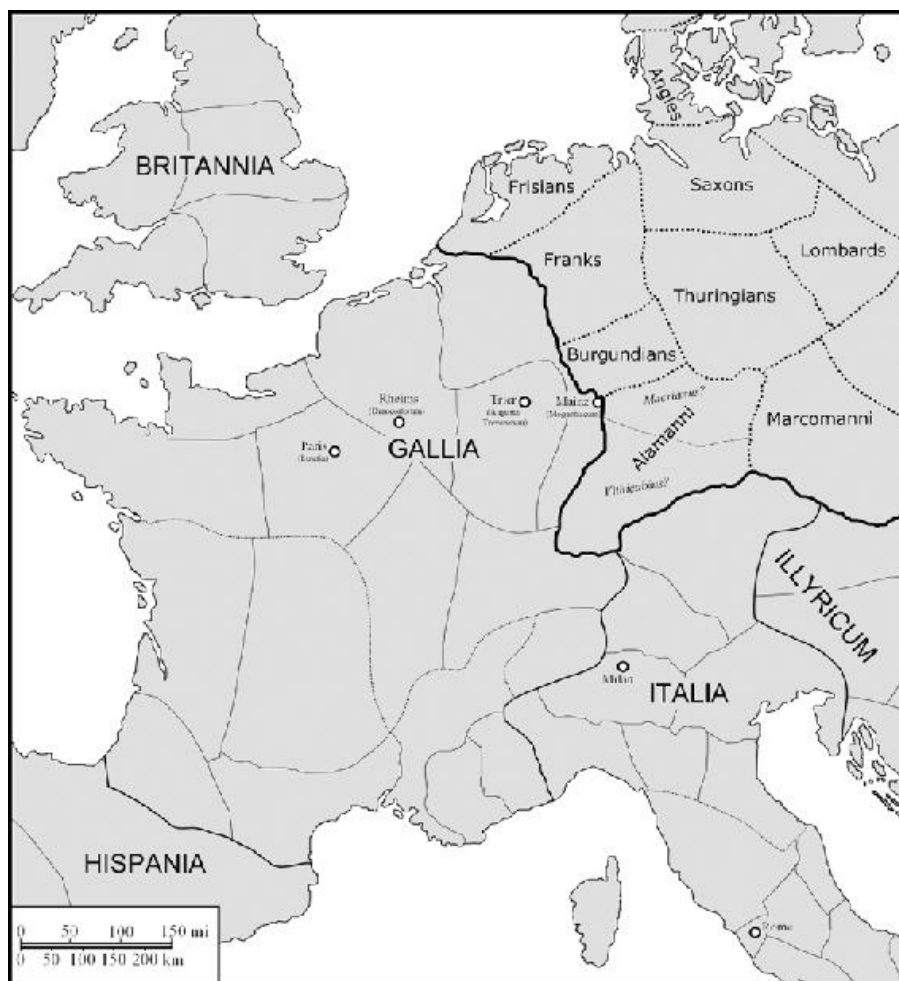
At a later, unknown date, the citizens of Lepcis Magna again sent envoys to Valentinian, and again Palladius was sent to investigate. This time, Romanus' agents bribed some of the citizens to bring charges against the envoys. The envoys were obviously found guilty and, probably in 368, executed.⁶⁴

A similar fate befell Ruricius, *praeses* (governor) of Africa Tripolitania, who submitted a report supporting the envoys and contradicting Romanus and Palladius. In frustration at the 'conspiracy' against Romanus, Valentinian ordered that Ruricius be executed at Sitifis, also in 368. The ongoing problem of corruption and attack in Africa was to continue.⁶⁵ The episode also

highlights the fact that it would always be difficult for emperors to be certain of the truth.

The Alamanni⁶⁶

Holding court at Milan, Valentinian received envoys from both inside and outside the Western Empire. One of the delegations that arrived was from the Alamanni. The Romans gave the name Alamanni to a large and disparate number of tribes along the western frontier, including the Lentienses, the Raetovarii, the Brisigavi and the Bucinobantes.⁶⁷ At the time of Valentinian's accession there appears to have been at least two loose confederations of tribes amongst the Alamanni, although there could easily have been more. In the 'north', the territory of the Bucinobantes around Mainz, the tribes were led by a man named Macrianus.⁶⁸ In the 'south' there was a group of tribes led by a man called Vithicabius.



Map 6. The Rhine Frontier. Please note that the boundaries between the barbarian tribes are

The difficulty in assessing the nature of Alamannic society lies in the paucity and nature of the Roman sources. It is probable that to a large degree ancient authors used *topoi* (standard formulae used when describing the unknown) when dealing with the northern tribes: for example, Ammianus himself uses similar terms to those describing the Alamanni when he describes the totally unrelated Sarmatians.⁶⁹ The only information which appears to be stated specifically about the Alamanni and no other tribes is that they traditionally dyed their hair red and liked strong drink, and that they were ‘solidly and unsophisticatedly pagan’.⁷⁰ Unfortunately, lacking other sources, it is necessary to use those available, whatever their shortcomings.

Analysis of Ammianus – especially the section dealing with the Battle of Strasbourg in 357 – and other sources suggests that politically the Alamanni were divided into *pagi* (districts/cantons), each of which enclosed a ‘discrete geographical area’, possibly overseen by men titled *regales* (princes).⁷¹ These were grouped into *regna* (‘kingships’), but the *regnae* were small and usually only comprised two *pagi*, possibly controlled by *reguli* (lesser kings).⁷² Several of these *regnae* were collected together under the authority of *proximi reges* (kings). In overall control of larger confederations were men called by the Romans *excelsiores ante alios reges* (superior kings).⁷³ As has been already noted, it would appear that in the mid-fourth century there were two such ‘confederations’, one in the north and one in the south.

Although the evidence is fragmentary, it would seem that at this time there was a tendency for the two ‘superior kings’ to be descended from earlier kings, implying the likelihood of a ‘dynastic succession’. This tendency may have been encouraged by the Roman preference for dealing with specific individuals, who were expected to take the lead politically and militarily when dealing with the Romans. The importance accorded to them by the Romans, as well as the giving of ‘gifts’, would have allowed these individuals and their families to wield great political power thanks to their increased income.⁷⁴ However, this should not be overstated: the kings could be forced by their nominal inferiors to accept the decision of the majority and could face difficulty when attempting to control their own warriors.⁷⁵

Below these ‘ruling’ classes were two groups known to the Romans: the *optimates* (nobles), possibly comprising the *comitatus* (nobles/armed following/household), the personal troops of the different leaders, and the *armati* (tribal warriors), formed from the free men of the tribes. Although untrained, the fact that Alamannic society was violent due to ‘social insecurity resulting from chronic poverty rather than population increase or natural catastrophe’ means that most adult men would have at least some experience of using a weapon.⁷⁶ According to the evidence, Alamannic military practice was for each *pagus* to supply 1,000 fighting men, meaning that only when the Alamanni acted in unison could they hope to outnumber the Roman armies

sent against them, and their inability to co-operate meant that they would never be in a position to threaten Rome.⁷⁷

To understand the relationship between the two 'kings' and Rome, it is necessary to look at events in the previous decade. In 359 Julian had invaded the territory of Macrianus, who at that time was ruling alongside his brother, Hariobaudes. Macrianus and Hariobaudes approached Julian as supplicants and were accepted as friends. At the same time, an embassy arrived led by Vadomarius, father of Vithicabius. Vadomarius was an ally of Constantius II and petitioned Julian for peace with the other 'kings' of the Alamanni. After a short continuation of the campaign, these other kings also approached Julian, at which point they too were granted peace on the same terms as Macrianus and Hariobaudes.⁷⁸

However, in 361 Vadomarius unexpectedly attacked Raetia. Defeated by Julian, he was captured and sent to Spain, after which he had a successful career in the Roman army.⁷⁹ According to Eunapius, Vithicabius, Vadomarius' son, was also captured by Julian, but was later freed and returned to rule in his father's stead.⁸⁰ Unlike his father, Vithicabius, although 'somewhat weak and sickly in appearance', was 'valiant and vigorous' and repeatedly encouraged and led attacks across the Roman border.⁸¹ The southern Alamannic frontier was to remain troubled throughout the reigns of Julian and Jovian until events came to a head in the reign of Valentinian and Valens.

In contrast, on the northern end of the border Macrianus became a trusted ally of Rome, maintaining the peace and easing tensions along the Rhine. However, his stance as a supportive friend was to be tested by events early in the reign of Valentinian.

After Valentinian's elevation envoys from this conglomeration of tribes arrived expecting to be treated with the respect accorded to their predecessors and demanding the traditional 'gifts' – presents from the newly crowned emperor to the 'kings' of the Alamanni.⁸² Superficially, the gifts acted as a 'bribe' to keep the Alamanni friendly. On a more detailed level, the money and gifts received by the 'kings' gave them the financial muscle to maintain their position in the cut-throat world of internal politics and assert at least a modicum of control over their fellow tribesmen. Breaking with tradition, Valentinian, or possibly Ursacius in his role as *magister officiorum*, only gave the men 'gifts' of inferior quality, which the envoys 'received with indignation and threw away as unworthy of them'.⁸³ The reason for this change of policy is unknown. It is possible that Valentinian was demonstrating that the new regime would be stricter and less indulgent towards the barbarians on the northern frontier than his predecessor Julian had been.⁸⁴ It is also possible that he was hoping to provoke a small-scale conflict with the Alamanni in which he could emulate the heroic deeds of Julian at the Battle of Argentoratum (Strasbourg) in 357. Whether planned or not, there had followed an ugly scene when the envoys had displayed their displeasure

at the poor treatment meted out by Ursacius, and the envoys had returned home, insulted and intent upon revenge.⁸⁵

Several months passed after the envoys of the Alamanni had departed, angry at their treatment. With tensions along the Rhine and upper Danube rising, it was clear that Valentinian needed to make his presence felt in Gaul. Given past history, leaving Gaul unattended and under threat of invasion could easily result in the provincials declaring their own nominee as emperor.

However, Valentinian was aware that tensions were also rising along the frontier with the Goths. Although these tended to be directed towards the Eastern empire, Valentinian knew that his prolonged presence in Gaul could result in a Gothic attack on Dacia Ripensis. Accordingly, he gave orders to Tuetomerus, a Frank who was *dux* of the province, to build new defence towers and repair old ones that were in poor condition.⁸⁶ After this, possibly in late June or early July 365, although the exact date is unknown, Valentinian left Milan and began his journey to Gaul.

He had left it too late. Angered at their treatment, and with the Roman emperor staying in the safety of Milan, some of the Alamannic tribes raided Gaul. Again, the date of their attack is unknown, but it is likely to have been in early summer 365, after they had finished sowing the spring crops.⁸⁷ Hearing of the attack, Charietto, *comes per utramque Germaniam* (Count of Both Germanies), 'took as a partner' Severianus, who commanded the Divitenses and Tungricani at Cabillona (Chalon-sur-Saône), and advanced with the combined forces against the invaders.⁸⁸ In the ensuing battle Severianus was wounded and his troops fled. Although Charietto was able to hold some of the troops together, eventually he was killed and the Alamanni were victorious.⁸⁹

Messengers were sent to the emperor with news of the defeat and caught up with him as he was in the region of Paris, probably in mid-late August.⁹⁰ On the same day he received the terrible news from the East concerning Procopius (see below).⁹¹ Unfortunately, the news from the East, carried by Equitius, *comes rei militaris per Illyricum* (Count of the Troops in Illyricum), was unsubstantiated and unclear.⁹² Valentinian knew that Procopius had been accepted in Constantinople, but did not know whether his brother had died and Procopius had been nominated as his successor in the East, or whether this was a rebellion. If the latter, he did not know whether Valens was leading an army to crush the rebellion or if he had already been killed.

Yet in some respects this would not have affected his decision. There were many factors demanding that Valentinian remain in the West, at least until the events in the East became clearer. One of these was the simple fact that he could not lead the Western troops east: they were likely to rebel, as the West, their homes and their families were already under direct threat of attack by the Alamanni.

Another factor demanding that he remain in the West was that if Valens was still alive and Valentinian hurried east to support his brother, the

impression in the East would be that Valentinian did not trust him as a military commander. The claims made later and echoed by Ammianus that Valentinian saw Procopius as a threat only to his brother whereas the Alamanni were a threat to the empire appear to have been little more than propaganda.⁹³

With the decision made, Valentinian gave his orders. Dagalaifus, the *magister peditum*, was sent to fight the Alamanni. Equitius was promoted from *comes rei militaris per Illyricum* (Count of the Troops in Illyricum) to the post of *comes et magister militum per Illyricum* (Master of the Troops in Illyricum) with instructions to defend the prefecture against any attacks from the East.⁹⁴

Leaving Paris, Valentinian moved to Rheims and, worried whether the news of the revolt in the East and the defeat in Gaul could stir the Austorians into a further attack, after much thought he sent his *notarius* (secretary) Neoterius to Africa with a small reinforcement of troops, supported by Masaucio, one of the *protectores* (guardsmen), who had had extensive military experience serving in Africa.⁹⁵ With his dispositions made, Valentinian awaited news from both Gaul and the East.

THE EAST

In the East, Valens was beginning his attempts to address the poor condition of the treasury. Either at the end of 364 or the beginning of 365, but definitely prior to April 365, he appointed his father-in-law Petronius as *Patricius*, assigning to him the task of collecting taxes for the imperial coffers.⁹⁶ Immediately, Petronius became renowned for his cruelty and avarice, and a groundswell of opposition to the new regime quickly arose, although in Petronius' defence it should be noted that draconian measures were needed to restore the treasury.⁹⁷



Map 7. The East 364. It should be noted that many of the boundaries for areas outside the Roman Empire are tentative and open to interpretation.

Persia

To make matters worse, the Persians were intent upon extracting the greatest benefit from the recent treaty. Although this information is not included in Ammianus' account, it is clear from other sources that following the peace treaty of 363 and Roman acceptance of non-interference in Armenia, Shapur II (309–379) promptly despatched a series of embassies in the East, attempting to convert Roman allies to the Persian cause. This was especially the case in Armenia, where Shapur began to use a combination of 'enticements and force' to win the support of the *optimates et satrapes* ('leading men'/'grandees' and satraps).⁹⁸ Shapur justified his actions with the claim that Armenia had 'formerly belonged to his forefathers'.⁹⁹

With regard to the Roman provinces in Upper Mesopotamia ceded in the Treaty of 363, these were divided between two Persian governors, who

proceeded to persecute the Christian population.¹⁰⁰ It was clear that Valens was needed in the East: although according to the treaty he could not attack the Persians or interfere in Armenia directly, the threat of his presence would hopefully deter possible Persian attacks on Armenia, help to keep other allied peoples in line, and possibly limit the Persian persecutions of Christians. In preparation, Valens ordered Petronius to tighten the laws concerning recruitment by ensuring that the sons of soldiers were following their fathers into the armed forces: although not expecting to fight, Valens could not afford to be caught unprepared.¹⁰¹

With everything in place, in late spring or early summer Valens finally left Constantinople and travelled east, aiming for Antioch (see Map 8).¹⁰² However, as he was on the journey, and shortly after he had entered Bithynia, he received news from the Danube that the Goths were amassing their forces and preparing to attack.¹⁰³ Intent upon reaching Antioch, Valens paused and gave orders for 'a sufficient reinforcement of cavalry and infantry to be sent to the places where inroads of the savages were feared'.¹⁰⁴ With the arrangements made, he continued his journey.

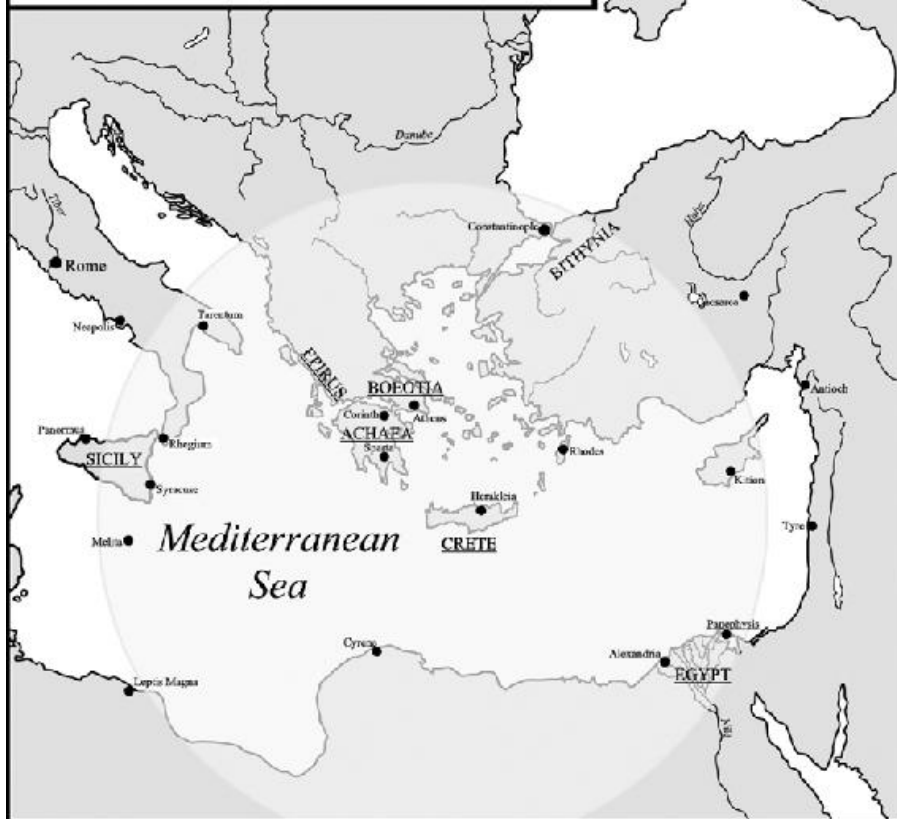
Tsunami

It is most likely that it was during his journey to the east that Valens received news of one of the most terrible natural disasters to afflict the Romans during the course of the century. On 21 July 365 a major earthquake struck the island of Crete. Land in Crete was raised over nine metres in height, and over a hundred cities on the island collapsed, doubtless with the loss of many lives.¹⁰⁵ However, bad as this was for the island, it was ruinous for many coastal regions of the eastern Mediterranean. The earthquake created a tsunami, a tidal wave that devastated areas as far apart as Sicily, the Peloponnese, Epirus, Achaëa, Boeotia and Egypt.¹⁰⁶ The loss of life was immeasurable, and the physical destruction caused by the tsunami would take many years to repair, if indeed this was at all possible: for example, Panephris in Egypt was permanently transformed into a brackish inland swamp.¹⁰⁷

The Mediterranean Tsunami

21 July 365

0 100 200m
0 100 200 300km



Map 8. Projected radius of the Tsunami of 365. Places mentioned in the text as being affected are underlined. Many places – for example Constantinople – will have been protected from the effects of the Tsunami by the topography.

Reaching Cappadocian Caesarea, Valens halted. He needed to organize supplies and relief forces for the territories struck by the tsunami. As one means of easing the suffering of the victims he may have announced a lessening of the taxes to be paid by the afflicted areas.¹⁰⁸ Further, the area around Caesarea was suffering from a stifling heatwave, and according to the sources Valens decided to await cooler weather.¹⁰⁹ Whilst still in the city, probably in early October, his *notarius* Sophronius arrived bearing terrible news: on 28 September 365 Procopius, a maternal relative of the emperor Julian, had begun a rebellion in Constantinople.¹¹⁰ Valens' first reaction was to abdicate the throne – although not noted by the sources, the coupling of the tsunami and the rebellion could easily be interpreted by a religious mind as

being signs that God was opposed to his rule – but dissuaded by his courtiers he took steps to counter the rebellion.¹¹¹ Sophronius, amongst others, counselled the demoralized emperor to head for Galatia to organize resistance to the rebellion.¹¹² Valens prepared to meet the first major challenge of his rule.

Chapter 4

The Revolt of Procopius and the Alamannic Invasion: 365–366

THE EAST

The Revolt of Procopius

Procopius

Procopius was born at some time around AD 326.¹ He was a relative of Julian, on Julian's mother's side, and could therefore claim a tenuous link to the Constantinian dynasty (although it should be noted that there was no actual family descent from Constantine or his sons, despite the fact that such a relationship was a 'cornerstone' of his later claim to the throne).² The fact that Procopius had no direct claim allowed the Emperor Constantius II (337–361) to employ Procopius as a *tribunus et notarius* (a high-level secretary).³ Further, Procopius had served as a *notarius* for a long time, which allowed Themistius to later mock him as a man with 'the eternal post of secretary'.⁴ On the other hand, Constantius trusted Procopius enough to allow him to take part in an embassy sent to the Persians in 358.⁵ These bureaucratic posts would allow Procopius ample opportunity to build up bureaucratic and military connections, as well as to understand the complicated machinery of imperial government. This would stand him in good stead in the future.

After Constantius' death, and prior to Julian's invasion of Persia, Julian promoted Procopius to the post of *comes* (Count) in Mesopotamia, leaving him with a reserve force, accompanied by the general Sebastianus.⁶ Zosimus claims that at this point Julian named Procopius as his successor and gave him a *paludamentum purpureum* (purple Imperial robe), but this is contradicted both by other sources and later events.⁷ When Julian led the main army into Persia Procopius did not remain idle, leading sorties into Media, but when Julian was killed he retreated and joined up with Jovian, the newly acclaimed emperor.⁸ Upon Procopius' arrival, Jovian commanded him to transport Julian's body to its burial place at Tarsus.

After this, Procopius' movements become unclear, either a testament to his ability to avoid detection or to the fact that he was deemed unimportant. Ammianus claims that Jovian attempted to have Procopius arrested, but the chronology here is questionable.⁹ As a result, it is probably wiser to follow Zosimus, who claims that after Julian's burial Procopius retired to his estates.

However, at some time after Valentinian's elevation an attempt was made to arrest Procopius, who with his imperial connections was probably the last possible claimant to the throne from the Constantinian dynasty.¹⁰ The most obvious cause for Procopius' need to flee is the inquest following the illness suffered by both Valentinian and Valens shortly after they had been raised to the throne. Again according to Zosimus, Procopius managed to get the men who arrived to arrest him drunk, and escaped to the Tauric Chersonese.¹¹ Finally, after 'over a year in fear and hiding, fleeing from the death he anticipated', Procopius finally took shelter on the estates of friends in Chalcedon.¹²

By this time Valentinian and Valens had been installed as co-emperors and they had divided the empire. Furthermore, Procopius slowly became aware of a growing discontent in Constantinople, caused by the tax-gathering exploits of Petronius, father-in-law of Valens, and possibly even at this early stage by Valens' pronouncements on religion. Rather than live out his life in fear, Procopius decided to make a bid for the throne.¹³

Earlier, as he was travelling east, Valens had heard rumours of a Gothic attack and had dispatched reinforcements to Thrace. Two units, named by Ammianus as the *Divitenses iuniores* and the *Tungricani iuniores*, were part of the force dispatched to counter the Gothic threat. These troops had halted at Constantinople and, following their orders, were resting for two days before going on to Thrace.¹⁴

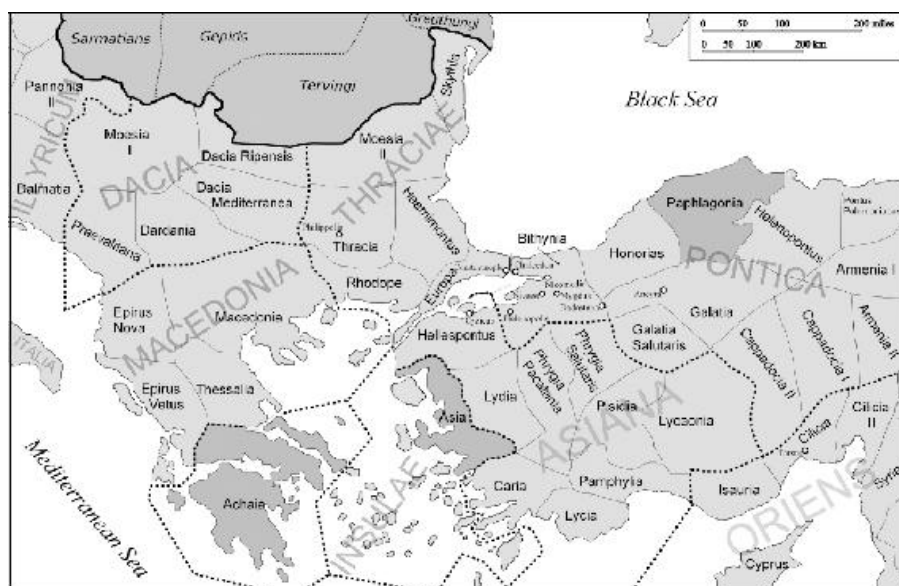
It should be noted here that Ammianus gives the same pair of names for the troops in the West defeated under Charietto and Severianus, the *Divitenses* and *Tungricani* based at Cabillona.¹⁵ It is possible that the four units began as two units, the *Divitenses* and *Tungricani*. When Valentinian and Valens divided the army, they may have split many of the single units in two. As a result, these new units retained their original names, but the units that travelled West with Valentinian either kept the original name as it was or added the epithet *seniores*, whereas those units which went East with Valens may have taken the epithet *iuniores*. However, it should be noted that debate continues around these titles, their origin and significance, although the claim that there is a single, uncomplicated explanation for what may have been a complex evolution of titles is probably too simplistic.¹⁶ Yet it is a surprising coincidence that both of these pairings were involved intimately at this early stage of Procopius' rebellion and in the Alamannic Wars.

The Start of the Revolt

Prior to his departure for Antioch, Valens had expelled a *cubicularius* (bed-chamber servant, chamberlain, one of many such individuals, and often – as in this case – a eunuch) named Eugenius from the palace. The reason is unknown. However, Eugenius was not stripped of his property and was accordingly very rich. Procopius was introduced to Eugenius and, since they had both suffered at the hands of the new emperors, a bond of friendship was

formed and Eugenius agreed to help finance the first stages of Procopius' revolt.¹⁷ Procopius began to assemble a 'considerable circle of confidants', which continued to grow: after even so short a time, Valens' financial, and possibly his ecclesiastical, policies had alienated many to his rule.¹⁸

With money available, Procopius approached the commanders of the *Divitenses iuniores* and *Tungricani iuniores* whilst they were resting in Constantinople before continuing their journey to Thrace. Using the money supplied by Eugenius as a massive donative, Procopius managed to secure the loyalty of the commanders of the two units.¹⁹ On the night of 28 September the troops were led to the Baths of Anastasia and Procopius was proclaimed before them and accepted as emperor.²⁰ He was then led into the streets of Constantinople and eventually acclaimed by the population:²¹ as Constantinople appears not to have had a garrison, the city had no option but to accept Procopius' nomination.²²



Map 9. Phase I of Procopius' Rebellion 365.

Although the whole episode is portrayed in 'farcical' terms by Ammianus and other contemporaries loyal to the Valentinianic dynasty, it is clear that the event was actually as carefully stage-managed as was possible. Although there is no evidence of Procopius having a *paludamentum purpureum* (see above), the fact that the conspirators managed to quickly take control of the means of spreading propaganda and of controlling information implies that a lot of thought had been given to the operation prior to the announcement.²³

On the same night as his coronation, Procopius issued arrest warrants for Valens' officials, including Nebridius, the Praetorian Prefect, and Caesarius, the Prefect of Constantinople.²⁴ They were replaced by Phronimius and

Euphrasius respectively.²⁵ Nebridius later died whilst still in captivity.²⁶

Procopius' immediate concern was the proximity of the army of Thrace, under the *comes* Julius. According to Ammianus, Procopius forced Nebridius to send an official order to Julius, commanding him to return to the capital for consultation.²⁷ This is a little odd: having captured Nebridius, and with him his insignia of office, it would appear that Procopius could simply have had the orders drafted and then dispatched with the official seal. Although it is possible that the order needed Nebridius' signature, it is strange that there was no one available who could forge such a document.

Julius duly arrived in Constantinople and was placed under arrest, and Procopius attempted to enlist Julius' men into the revolt. In this he was helped by a piece of good fortune: during the ceremonies surrounding his crowning he had come into contact with Faustina, the widow of Constantius II, and her daughter by Constantius, Constantia Postuma. Taking the child in his arms, and presenting himself as the heir of the Constantinian dynasty, he was able to entice many of the troops, who still honoured Constantius' memory, to join him.²⁸ The Thracian troops were assimilated into the rebellion, and Procopius appointed a man named Andronicus as the new *vicar* of Thrace.²⁹ The rebellion was gathering momentum.

Probably at the same time, Procopius, aware of the difficulty of fighting a war on two fronts, took measures to stop any attack from Valentinian in the West. The navy based in Constantinople may have had little choice but to join the rebellion and Procopius closed the waters of the Bosphorus, so cutting off the easiest and fastest route of communication between Valens and Valentinian: in a world of limited communications, Procopius would guess that Valentinian would be unlikely to send help unless Valens requested aid.³⁰ Valentinian would not react to mere rumours and gossip.

Additionally, in a bid to further secure his position and to cause the maximum confusion and distrust amongst supporters of the new dynasty, Procopius arranged for imposters to pose as officials from the West claiming that Valentinian had died, as well as arranging for false embassies to come from the East accepting his own nomination as Emperor.³¹

Finally, Procopius attempted to gain support in Illyricum, sending agents to the area for the purpose. These were foiled by Equitius, who captured and executed the men. Warned by the attempt, Equitius, the Western *comes rei militaris per Illyricum* (Count of the Troops in Illyricum), now blocked the three major passes into Illyricum, in case Procopius should attempt to pacify the region by force.³²

The failure to secure Illyricum was to hinder Procopius' plans. He had secured the loyalty of the Divitenses iuniores and the Tungricani iuniores, along with other troops Valens had sent to Thrace to face the Goths, and the Thracian army. In addition, there may have been a token force in the capital, garrisoning key installations and the palace, which also joined the revolt. Yet Illyricum was one of the major recruiting grounds of the empire and failure to

control the province resulted in Procopius facing a shortage of manpower. Although he attempted to bolster his forces by recruiting barbarian auxiliaries, and by enrolling the ‘urban rabble’ of Constantinople and even slaves into his forces, he was unable to match the manpower commanded by Valens, who had the majority of the Eastern army awaiting him in Antioch for the march to the eastern frontier.³³

Knowing this to be the case, Procopius sent messengers to the Goths. The envoys claimed that the Goths were obliged to supply troops to the Romans due to the Treaty they had signed with Constantine I in 332. The envoys also claimed that Procopius was the last of the ‘Constantinian dynasty’ and that therefore the Goths were honour-bound to help him.³⁴ Seeing an opportunity to benefit from a Roman civil war, the Goths began to muster their forces.

Having done what he could in Europe, Procopius left Constantinople and moved to Chalcedon, making the city his base for the upcoming war. It is likely that, as he had already sheltered in the area, he had many supporters in Chalcedon and had been able to take control of the city easily.³⁵

Valens

In the meantime Valens, recovering his nerve, headed to Galatia. News from Constantinople would no doubt have been confusing and unsubstantiated. The size of Procopius’ rebellion would still have been unknown, and it is likely that Valens believed that as yet only a few units had joined the rebellion. At this early stage Valens may not have known of the defection of the army of Thrace. Nevertheless, assuming the worst-possible scenario, he appears to have sent to Antioch for reinforcements.³⁶

Having only a few forces of his own, as the majority of the army was waiting for him in Antioch, Valens may have recruited garrison troops in the area into his *comitatus*, for example promoting the First Isaurians (I Isauria) from *limitanei* to *pseudocomitatenses*.³⁷ With the army thus strengthened, Valens acted in typically Roman fashion by sending the elite units of the *Iovii* and *Victores* ahead, probably in the hope that they would quash the rebellion before it could become serious.³⁸ It had been a common factor in early Roman warfare that, at the first sign of a rebellion, local forces would attempt to crush the rebellion before it could grow.³⁹ He also sent his *comes domesticorum* (count of the household) Serenianus to secure the city of Cyzicus and its mint: the ability to make coins and the reserves of gold located at the mint would help Procopius in his revolt if he captured them. Meanwhile, Valens moved his headquarters to Ancyra.⁴⁰

Almost immediately Valens was informed that one of his choices had gone disastrously wrong. The decision to divide his forces had proven to be a mistake: Procopius met the *Iovii* and *Victores* at Mygdus, east of Nicaea, and persuaded them to change sides.⁴¹ With their help Procopius was able to secure Nicaea, Nicomedia and Helenopolis.⁴² The provinces ruled by Procopius now included Thrace and Byzantium, and as he expanded into

Bithynia Procopius doubtless had his sights set on controlling the whole of the Diocese of Asiana.⁴³ Along with the expanding territory, Procopius now had a 'sizeable' army under his command.⁴⁴ His hopes of winning the war were growing.

At the onset of winter, Valens moved to face Procopius. He detached a force under Vadomarius to lay siege to Nicaea. Vadomarius was father of the Alamannic 'king' Vithicabius. In 361 he had been arrested by order of Julian and later served Rome as a military commander in the East.⁴⁵ Valens took the rest of the army and, bypassing Nicomedia, laid siege to Chalcedon, the heart of Procopius' rebellion.⁴⁶ The dating of his movements is problematic, but it would appear that he was besieging the city by 1 December at the latest.⁴⁷ Unfortunately for Valens, he was let down by Vadomarius. Rumitalca, the leader of Procopius' garrison in Nicaea, sallied from the city and defeated Vadomarius. As Vadomarius retreated, Rumitalca took his forces towards Chalcedon, hoping to trap Valens between the forces in the city and his own troops. Fortuitously, Valens heard of Rumitalca's victory and advance, and led his forces out of the trap, escaping around the Sunonian Lake and heading back towards Ancyra.⁴⁸ Although the manoeuvre may have been under the control of his generals, it is possible that avoiding the trap is the first indication that Valens had some skill as a general.⁴⁹

With Valens in retreat, Procopius was able to secure Bithynia, before going on to lay siege to Cyzicus. In short order he captured the city, its mint, the precious metal reserves in the city, and Serenianus.⁵⁰ The capture of Cyzicus gave Procopius control over Hellespontus and opened the road to Asiana.⁵¹ His star continued to rise.

Although the exact chronology is insecure, it is almost certainly at this point, with Valens defeated and Asiana open to attack, that Helpidius, *Proconsul Asiae* (Proconsul of Asiana), deserted to Procopius. He was replaced as Proconsul by Hormisdas, grandson of the Persian Shah Hormisdas II (301/302–309). Hormisdas' father, also named Hormisdas, had earlier fled from Persia and settled within the empire.⁵²

Defeated, it was clear to Valens that he could not overcome Procopius with the small forces he had available. Accordingly, he stayed at Ancyra and awaited reinforcements from the East. At last, at the end of 365, Lupicinus arrived at Ancyra with fresh troops.⁵³ These were put under the command of Arintheus, a man who had served in Julian's eastern expedition in 363 and was well known to the soldiers.⁵⁴ Arintheus led his army to the border of Galatia and Bithynia. Here, they encountered some of Procopius' forces, under a man named Hyperechius. At Dadastana, Arintheus easily persuaded the majority of Hyperechius' men to desert: Hyperechius was arrested and handed to Arintheus.⁵⁵ His fate is unknown. At last, Valens' troops had tasted a success.

The expectation of cold weather plus the need to secure further supplies now forced both sides to retreat to their winter quarters, according to common

Roman practice: Valens remained at Ancyra and, perhaps surprisingly, Procopius remained at Cyzicus.⁵⁶ By this time Procopius had become aware that Valentinian was taking no action in the West, so there was no need to worry about an attack in his rear.⁵⁷ With the break, Procopius used the time to take measures to secure the newly won territory and to increase his revenue. He attempted to win the support of 'hesitant *poleis*', as well as taking steps to secure the financial support of wealthy local aristocrats.⁵⁸

Arbitio

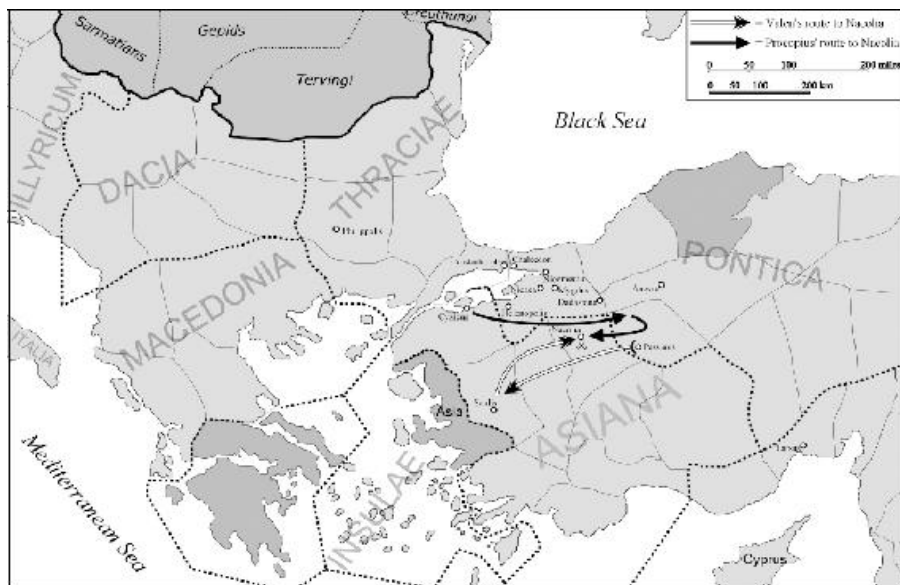
Unfortunately, Procopius' confidence had grown according to his conquests, and he was unwilling to accept that anybody would oppose his rule. Aristocrats who refused to co-operate with his demands for money and support were 'punished'.⁵⁹ As part of these measures, Procopius made a fatal mistake.

Flavius Arbitio had already served as a *dux* (Duke), under either Constantine I or Constantius II, and as *magister militum* (Master of the Troops) under Constantius II before being awarded the consulship in 355. In 361 Julian had made him president of the Commission of Chalcedon, shortly after which Arbitio had retired.⁶⁰ Although Ammianus claims that he was 'harsh and unfair', this appears to have been directed against rivals: because he posed no threat to the troops, he retained their loyalty and admiration due to the campaigns earlier in his career under Constantine.⁶¹

Recognizing that Arbitio would be a valuable addition to his cause, Procopius tried to recruit him on several occasions, each time being rebuffed: Arbitio claimed that he was both too old and unwell to serve. As a result, Procopius lost patience and ordered Arbitio's house to be stripped of its costly furniture. The move alienated a man whose support would prove vital to his enemy.⁶²

The Campaign of 366

Early in the new year Valens received a piece of extremely good news. On 18 January 366 his wife gave birth to their first child, a son, who was given the name Valentinian.⁶³ Buoyed by the news, and with the passing of winter and the coming of the new campaigning year, fresh troops arrived from Antioch and Valens determined to take the initiative.⁶⁴ He left Ancyra and moved his headquarters to Pessinus in Western Galatia.⁶⁵ Leaving a garrison in the town, he entered Phrygia and moved towards Lydia, planning to attack Procopius. Procopius was also determined to defeat Valens before the whole army that had been gathered at Antioch could return and be deployed against him. Leaving behind a force under his general Gomoarius and Hormisdas, Proconsul of Asiana, Procopius moved towards Galatia in an attempt to locate Valens.



Map 10. Phase 2 of Procopius' Rebellion 366.

The two commanders took different routes into each others' territory, and so missed each other. However, Procopius' stratagem of aligning himself with the Constantinian dynasty and of keeping Constantia Postuma, Constantius II's daughter, with him bore fruit: Procopius' troops bravely resisted Valens' advance, convinced that they were fighting for the 'Constantines'.⁶⁶

At this point Valens cleverly made use of Procopius' earlier behaviour: he convinced Arbitio, already unhappy with Procopius' treatment, to join him. As one of Constantine the Great's generals, Arbitio commanded the respect of the army, and Valens' troops received a massive morale boost, knowing that Arbitio supported their cause. Arbitio now used this to benefit Valens, calling on Procopius' army to change sides. It is even possible that, angered at his treatment, Arbitio actually came out of retirement and served as *magister militum* to Valens, although the accuracy of this statement is unclear.⁶⁷ Procopius' general Gomoarius, who was an old friend of Arbitio, immediately changed sides.⁶⁸ Procopius' other commander in the area, Hormisdas, put up a strong resistance, but was narrowly defeated and fled.⁶⁹

Valens now had the initiative. A large part of Procopius' army had been either convinced to change sides or had been defeated, but, of even more importance, Gomoarius now informed Valens of all of Procopius' plans for the campaign season.⁷⁰ Regrouping his forces at Sardis, Valens led his troops back to face Procopius in what would be the final battle of the rebellion.⁷¹

Equitius

By this stage of the campaigning season Equitius, serving Valentinian as military commander in Thrace, realized that Procopius was concentrating all

of his forces in the east. Feeling that Illyricum was safe from attack, Equitius left his designated territory and advanced into the lands controlled by Procopius, laying siege to Philippopolis.⁷²

Although the move may have been unilateral on the part of Equitius, it is also possible that Valentinian had finally gained news from the East concerning the nature and extent of the revolt, along with the news that Valens was alive and well and attempting to eliminate Procopius. As a result, Valentinian may have ordered Equitius to invade in support of Valens. Unfortunately, as no ancient source records the reason for Equitius' attack, this must remain hypothesis.⁷³

The defenders of Philippopolis put up a stubborn resistance and Equitius settled down to a long siege. However, he did not remain idle, sending some of his most trusted men deeper into the provinces loyal to Procopius to spy out the land and gather information.⁷⁴ Yet Equitius' initiative had one further consequence: the Goths had promised to send troops to aid Procopius, but the siege blocked the most direct route to the east. Unwilling to risk bypassing the siege and so leaving their rear open to attack, the Goths did not send the promised reinforcements in time.

The Battle of Nacolia

In the east, Valens and Procopius were ready to fight the deciding battle. The two sides finally met near Nacolia in Phrygia on 26 May 366. As the two sides began to fight, Procopius' general, Agilo, changed sides, being followed by a large number of the troops.⁷⁵ The remainder lost heart and, realizing that he had lost, Procopius fled and took refuge in some nearby woods. On the morning of 27 May, Procopius' attendants, named Florentius and Barchalba, bound him and took him to Valens, doubtless hoping to secure their own safety and possibly a reward for their treachery. They were to be disappointed: Valens had them both executed.⁷⁶ In honour of the successful crushing of the rebellion, Valens' son Valentinian was given the nickname 'Galates' after the province from which Valens had launched his campaign.

Procopius himself was beheaded. His head was then sent to Valentinian in the West, on the way travelling through territories he had controlled to prove that he was really dead.⁷⁷ On the way the head arrived at the city of Philippopolis, where Equitius was still laying siege to the town. With proof that the rebellion was over, the defenders surrendered the town to Equitius.⁷⁸

Although Procopius had come close to ruling the East, his own mistakes had condemned him to defeat. Had he not alienated Arbitio, Arbitio would doubtless have remained neutral in the conflict. With Valens deprived of Arbitio's support, Valens' troops would not have received the boost to their morale provided by Arbitio's presence. Furthermore, it is likely that few, if any, of Procopius' troops would have defected to Valens without Arbitio's influence. Procopius' poor treatment of Arbitio can be described as the turning point in the rebellion and the cause of its failure.

Yet maybe this was inevitable: Ammianus describes Procopius as ‘retiring and silent’, ‘secret and gloomy’, and he is described elsewhere as being ‘morose’, although Ammianus also comments favourably on the fact that ‘throughout his life he was not stained by bloodshed’.⁷⁹ It would seem inevitable that at some point his lack of charm and political skill would alienate those surrounding him. Further, as long as the majority of Valens’ military forces remained loyal, Procopius’ failure to gain control of Illyricum meant that he would never have the manpower to face Valens in battle on even terms. Although his connection with Constantia Postuma secured the loyalty of many troops, whether this would work on the whole of the Eastern army, now on its way to Ancyra to reinforce Valens, remains open to doubt. In this context, his failure to secure a strong personal tie with a leader such as Arbitio fatally weakened his hand, and his understanding of the likely result of his failure explains his anger and frustration when Arbitio refused to support him. His punishment of Arbitio was his only major mistake. Without Arbitio, Procopius’ future was in doubt: with Arbitio in Valens’ camp, Procopius’ failure was certain.

Marcellus and the End of the Revolt

Yet the rebellion was not quite over. Hearing that Procopius was dead, a relative named Marcellus determined to continue the revolt: allegedly, he had previously been named as successor by Procopius.⁸⁰ Marcellus had remained in Chalcedon when Procopius had left on his final campaign and, expecting at any moment the arrival of the Gothic reinforcements that had been promised to Procopius, he prepared to continue the campaign. He did not know that the Goths’ route of march had been blocked by Equitius in the West and that his wait would be in vain. Instead, he was quickly arrested by agents sent ahead by Equitius, and he was tortured before being executed.⁸¹ The revolt was finally over.

It is possible that the death of Marcellus annoyed Valens: Marcellus’ death is not mentioned by Themistius in his oration to Valens given on the defeat of the revolt.⁸² This would not be surprising: after all, Valens had won the war in the East on his own and probably felt aggrieved that the final act in the rebellion had been ordered by a Western general, when otherwise the West had done little to support him. Nevertheless, Valens, unaided, had passed the first major crisis of his reign, thereby greatly strengthening his grip on power. However, the fact that the Goths had not only been prepared to invade Thrace before the rebellion began but had then promised to actively support Procopius could not go unpunished. Valens now had to determine what action to take against them.

Some senior officials in the East had, like the Goths, supported Procopius. Individual punishments for these men varied: some were pardoned, others sentenced to exile, whilst still others were doubtless executed. Strangely, Phronimius, who had been made prefect of Constantinople, and Euphrasius,

who had been promoted to *magister officiorum*, were both Gauls.⁸³ For an unknown reason Valens sent them to Valentinian to be tried. Euphrasius was acquitted, but Phronimius was exiled to the Chersonese.⁸⁴ Finally, Themistius, in the Oration noted above, declared that the ‘persecution of Procopius’ supporters’ was at an end.⁸⁵

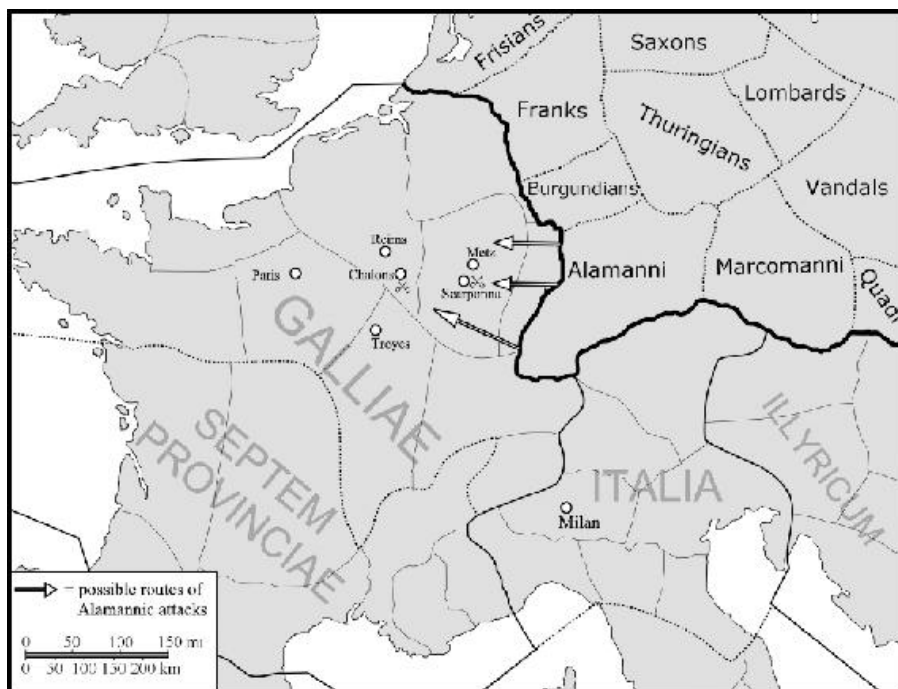
Persia

Whilst Valens was defeating Procopius’ revolt, Shapur was making the most of his opportunity. Using a combination of bribery and force, Shapur began to place ever-greater pressure on the kingdoms and nobles in the east in the hope of securing their defection from their alliances to Rome.⁸⁶ However, although Valens was occupied elsewhere, Shapur did not feel confident enough to launch all-out attacks yet, possibly in fear of a further war with Rome.

THE WEST

The Alamannic War: Part One⁸⁷

When news of Procopius’ rebellion had arrived in the West, Valentinian had made the decision to stay in Gaul and take control of the campaign against the Alamanni. However, in case his presence was desperately needed in the east to help Valens, he had decided to entrust the Alamannic campaign itself to Dagalaifus, the *magister peditum* (Master of the Infantry). At the same time, Valentinian had promoted Equitius from *comes rei militaris per Illyricum* (Count of the Troops in Illyricum) to the post of *comes et magister militum per Illyricum* (Count and Master of the Troops in Illyricum) with instructions to defend the diocese against any attacks from the East.⁸⁸



Map 11. The West 365.

Unfortunately for Dagalaifus, his chance of defeating the Alamanni and attaining immediate military glory were dashed: after defeating Charietto, the Alamanni had withdrawn across the frontier with their booty. Dagalaifus did not have enough troops, the emperor's permission, or the time necessary to leave the empire and attack the Alamanni. With the end of the year approaching, Dagalaifus was recalled: his presence was needed at the ceremonies surrounding his appointment as consul for 366, which itself was probably a reward for his support during the discussions surrounding Valentinian's elevation to the throne. His partner in the consulship was Gratian, son of Valentinian, who was not yet seven years old.⁸⁹

Although only speculation, it is possible that at this stage Valentinian was contemplating sending further aid to Valens in the East. It may be that the rewarding of the consulship to Dagalaifus, combined with the promotion of Equitius in Illyricum, was in preparation for a prospective campaign in the East – if needed. In that case, it would only be natural for Jovinus, the next most senior officer, to take command in the West to crush the Alamanni and protect the frontiers. As a result, it is possible to conclude that Dagalaifus was probably either in Italy or Illyricum during the rest of this and the following year, although he is not mentioned again in any sources. The only alternative is to assume either that he died shortly after accepting the consulship, or that his failure to defeat the Alamanni resulted in him being 'retired' from service.⁹⁰ Unfortunately, neither Ammianus nor any other ancient writer gives

any further clue to either the fate of Dagalaifus or the reasons behind Valentinian's actions, so the theory must remain speculation.⁹¹

Unable to take personal command, Valentinian sent Jovinus, *magister equitum* (Master of the Cavalry) to replace Dagalaifus.⁹² Jovinus, in the best traditions of the Roman army, made sure that his men were 'thoroughly equipped and prepared', probably meaning that old equipment was replaced and some effort was made to train and drill the troops, after which he waited for news concerning the Alamanni's next move.⁹³

The Alamanni

The reactions of the Alamannic 'kings' to the successful invasion are not recorded. It is most likely that some Alamannic leaders, Macrianus amongst them, will have been angry at the fact that some of their fellow tribesmen had invaded the empire. Although they had not taken part, they knew they would be implicated in the invasion and now faced the prospect of an undeserved counter strike from the empire.

However, for the majority, the overriding concern will have been the lack of Roman subsidies. Valentinian, a new, arrogant emperor, had refused to give the traditional 'gifts'. The tribal leaders on the frontiers of Gaul needed the Roman subsidies to maintain their position within tribal society, using the income to pay for a large *comitatus* (personal following of troops) with which to defend their position and enforce their will. Without this income, they would struggle to meet the demands of their followers or dominate the local tribes.⁹⁴ In order to maintain their status, the majority of the tribal leaders could not afford to accept Roman resistance without a fight, as this would be interpreted as weakness and encourage disaffection or even rebellion and a change of allegiance within their own tribes. They will have been encouraged in their need to attack by the fact that the Roman army in Gaul had been unexpectedly defeated. This was a sign that, maybe, the new emperor was in fact a poor military leader and that now was a good time to attack.

Gathering their forces, on or shortly after 1 January 366 the Alamanni invaded Gaul in three major 'divisions', plus many smaller groups of semi-independent tribesmen.⁹⁵ Hearing of the invasion, Jovinus moved to meet the intruders. It is unfortunate that Ammianus does not give us a complete description of the course of the war. He simply states that: 'besides ... [the battles he depicts] ... many others less worthy of mention were fought in various parts of Gaul, which it would be superfluous to describe'.⁹⁶ It would appear that over the course of several months the defending armies of Gaul fought many battles, apart from those fought by the troops under Jovinus. Fortunately, Ammianus does tell us about the battles against the three main invading forces.

As the Alamannic forces moved into Roman territory, Jovinus was able to identify one of the advancing Alamannic armies. He advanced to meet them, possibly defeating or dispersing smaller groups of barbarians along the way.

As he neared the enemy Jovinus deployed his troops, ‘carefully guarding both wings of his army’, and cautiously moved to meet them.⁹⁷ Possibly in early-mid March, in the vicinity of Scarponna (Charpeigne, on the Moselle), Jovinus’ tactics of stealth and care paid off handsomely.⁹⁸ He took the Alamannic army completely by surprise. Before they could take up arms and form to meet the Romans, they were swept away and annihilated.⁹⁹ With the troops’ morale greatly buoyed by the victory, Jovinus set out to find one of the other major invasion forces. Along the way it is likely that again he was able to defeat or scatter small detachments of barbarian raiders.

Sending scouts ahead of his army to locate the enemy, Jovinus cautiously advanced towards the expected enemy location. The decision to send out scouts proved to be an excellent choice: one of his scouting parties reported that ‘after plundering the neighbouring farmhouses a predatory band was resting near the river’: unfortunately, Ammianus does not name the river.¹⁰⁰ Advancing with extreme caution, Jovinus managed to bring his troops to the edge of a valley, where: ‘Hidden in a valley concealed by a thick growth of trees, he saw that some were bathing, others were reddening their hair after their national custom, and still others were drinking.’¹⁰¹ Preparing his troops, Jovinus suddenly gave the signal, and his men rushed the enemy camp. Taken completely by surprise, the majority of the Alamanni were killed, whilst a few escaped by taking refuge along the ‘winding and narrow paths’ in the area.¹⁰² Again, the dating of this victory is problematic, but a date some time in April would appear to be the most likely.¹⁰³

The Battle of Chalôns

Jovinus now had a minimum of two victories under his belt, but by this time he will have known that he had not yet faced the largest invasion force. Not wishing to miss the opportunity of defeating all of the Alamannic armies, Jovinus again sent ahead scouting parties, but this time dispensed with caution and quickly moved to locate and destroy the enemy.¹⁰⁴ Locating the enemy near Chalôns (Chalôns-sur-Marne), Jovinus advanced to meet them. However, this time he split his troops, sending the Ascarii, a unit of *auxilia palatina*, by another route to cut off the enemy’s line of retreat.¹⁰⁵ Moving with the majority of his troops directly against the enemy, his lack of caution resulted in the Alamanni being aware of his approach, and they had already formed up ready for battle when he arrived.

Unwilling to fight the enemy after a long, fast march, Jovinus set his men to building a secure camp surrounded by a stockade. Having rested for the night:

At the coming of dawn he drew up his line of battle in the open plain; and he extended it with such skilful art, that the Romans, who were inferior in number (but equal in strength), by occupying a greater space appeared to be as numerous as the enemy.

The ruse appears to have only worked for a short time, after which the Alamanni had realized that they outnumbered the Romans:

The Germans stood amazed, terrified by the fearful sight of the gleaming standards. For a while their ardour was blunted, but they quickly recovered and prolonged the fighting to the end of the day.

Ammianus, 27.2.6

The fact that Ammianus states that the fighting continued from early in the morning until the end of the day testifies to the ferocity and the resistance of the Alamannic troops. At one point the Roman line had almost given way: Balchobaudes, the ‘tribune of the heavy armed guards’ (*armaturarum tribunus*), described by Ammianus as ‘both boastful and cowardly’, had withdrawn with his men late in the day.¹⁰⁶ Fortunately, the rest of the Roman troops had remained in place and eventually the coming of night halted the fighting. According to Ammianus, the Romans had lost fewer than 1,200 men killed, with only 200 wounded; the Alamanni had 6,000 dead and 4,000 wounded.¹⁰⁷ It is likely that the initial losses suffered by the Alamanni were nowhere near this figure: in ancient battles, the vast majority of the losses were caused when the defeated enemy turned and routed; the Alamanni had not routed, returning to their camp in good order at the coming of night.

On the morning after the battle, Jovinus again led his men out to face the Alamanni, only to find that they had fled under cover of darkness. Realizing that the enemy were intent on escape and not preparing to prolong the fight, Jovinus unleashed his troops and allowed them to pursue them as they fled. It is likely that it is during the pursuit that large numbers of the enemy were caught and killed, only at this point reaching near to the figures given by Ammianus.

During the pursuit Jovinus learned that the unit called Ascarii, who he had sent to cut off the enemy’s retreat, had captured a ‘king’ (*regem*) of the enemy and had arbitrarily executed him. Furious, Jovinus was determined to punish the tribune of the Ascarii until he discovered that the troops had acted without orders, killing the enemy king without permission from the tribune.¹⁰⁸

Despite this minor setback, Jovinus had conducted a brilliant campaign against the Alamanni, heavily defeating their armies and forcing them to flee for home. Elated, he returned to report to Valentinian, according to Ammianus at this time still in Paris, but more likely at Reims.¹⁰⁹ Valentinian was understandably overjoyed at the news and as a reward nominated Jovinus for the consulship of the following year, 367.¹¹⁰

Valentinian’s joy was further enhanced by news from the East. Before Jovinus’ return to court news arrived stating that the rebellion of Procopius had been defeated and that Valens was alive and well. This was followed shortly after – Ammianus claiming at the same time as Jovinus’ return to court – by the arrival of Procopius’ head as proof that the rebellion in the East was over.¹¹¹ Valentinian’s decision to remain in the West had been vindicated:

the Alamanni had been heavily defeated and Valens had put down Procopius' rebellion unaided, enhancing Valens' military prestige in the East. The security of the two emperors seemed assured.

Religious Unrest

There was only one minor cloud on the horizon. In 366 there was an episcopal election in Rome with two candidates, Damasus and Ursinus. The followers of the two men engaged in 'bloody riots' in the streets of Rome, with many being killed. Viventius, the *praefectus urbi* (Prefect of the City), proved unable to quell the riots and was forced to stand aside and await the outcome. Eventually, Damasus emerged triumphant and Ursinus was expelled from the city, although he claimed victory and is listed as an 'anti-pope', a rival claimant to the 'accepted' Pope Damasus.¹¹² Although of little import to the safety of the Empire, and Valentinian himself thought the episode of such little note that he appears to have taken no action, the riots demonstrated that even when the Christians followed one doctrine strife could easily arise anywhere in the Empire.

Chapter 5

367¹

Valentinian and Valens

Although they were now apparently secure on their thrones, events had demonstrated that the two emperors could not rest on their laurels. Both had faced invasions from across the European frontiers of the Empire and Valens had quashed an important internal revolt, but both still needed to take further action.

For Valentinian, the attacks launched by the Alamanni in 366 needed reprisals. To do otherwise would send the message across Germania that the Empire was weak and open to attack with impunity. Furthermore, his imperial rivals would be looking for a source of weakness: Valentinian needed an imperial victory to bolster his regime. Valentinian had no choice but to assume the offensive.

For the same reason Valens could not afford to allow the threatened attack by the Tervingi and their support for Procopius to go unpunished. Procopius' rebellion had proved that he needed to establish control of the East, and the traditional method to establish an emperor's suitability to rule was to conduct a successful war against 'barbarians'.

Taking these factors into account, it is likely that the two emperors entered lengthy long-distance consultations to discuss their next course of action. After all, action by Valens in *Gothia* could have repercussions on the Western frontier along the Rhine, and Valentinian's intended attack on the Alamanni could have ramifications for the Eastern frontier along the Danube (see map 11). The brother-emperors agreed to lead a two-pronged assault on Germania, Valentinian against the Alamanni and Valens against the Tervingi.² In this way each would support the other by covering each others' flanks, negating the possibility of barbarian attacks elsewhere along the northern border.

Although Valens' campaign would set out at the appointed time, Valentinian was to be faced with unexpected difficulties from the western extremes of the empire, and the campaign planned for 367 would not materialize.

THE WEST

The Alamanni

The Alamanni were apparently aware of the plans to invade their territory in the campaign season of 367. A law passed by Valentinian in January 367

forbids Roman officials on the Rhine from allowing barbarian envoys to use the Roman army's pack animals to ease the envoys' travels inside the Empire, although it does accept that the envoys' own animals would need to be supplied with fodder from imperial stockpiles for their journey.³ It would appear that the Alamanni were taking steps to avoid the upcoming invasion and had sent envoys to Valentinian, possibly in the hope of securing a peace treaty. These had been supplied with pack animals by the commanders on the frontier, a move which had greatly angered the emperor. The hopes of the majority of the envoys were to be dashed.

Only those sent by Macrianus may have succeeded.⁴ It is possibly at this date that Macrianus proposed that he should recruit a military unit for the Romans from among his people. Although the dating and the attribution is actually more insecure than most historians have acknowledged, there is the possibility that the unit named 'Bucinobantes' in the *Notitia Dignitatum* was raised at this time from amongst the Alamanni who acknowledged Macrianus as their leader.⁵ If the dating is accurate, the affirmation of loyalty will have helped to ease Valentinian's decision as to what action to take. On the other hand, a later date is just as likely.⁶

The 'Barbarian Conspiracy': the Traditional Chronology

Despite the preparations, events along the north-western border stopped Valentinian in his tracks. It is impossible to date accurately the events surrounding the '*barbarica conspiratio*' of the summer of 367. The main problem is that Ammianus appears to have been in Antioch throughout the period and so his information concerning events in the West is second hand and confused.⁷ Furthermore, other sources contain information which does not match that of Ammianus. Consequently, and despite modern assumptions, it is possible to propose several different chronologies for the course of the 'barbarian conspiracy'.

It is worth quoting the passage in Ammianus describing these events (the gap in the text is a *lacuna*):

Having set out then from Amiens and hastening to Treves, Valentinian was alarmed by serious news which showed that Britain was brought into a state of extreme need by a conspiracy of the savages, that Nectaridus, the commanding general of the seacoast region, had been killed, and that another general, Fullofaudes, had been ambushed by the enemy and taken prisoner. This report aroused great horror, and the emperor sent Severus, who at that time was still commander of the household troops, to set right the disasters, if chance should offer the desired opportunity. But he was recalled a little later, and Jovinus..... having set out for the same regions, allowed them to return at quick step, intending to seek the support of a strong army; for he declared that this was demanded by the pressing necessities of the situation. Finally, because of the

many alarming things which constant rumours reported about that same island, Theodosius, a man most favourably known for his services in war, was chosen to be sent there with all speed, and having enrolled legions and cohorts of courageous young men, he hastened to depart, preceded by brilliant expectations.

Ammianus Marcellinus, 27.8.1–3



Map 12. The Barbarian Conspiracy 365-7.

Here we have a strict chronology: Valentinian left Amiens and moved the court to Trier. En route, Valentinian was informed that Britain had been attacked, that Nectaridus, *comes maritime tractus* (commanding general of the

seacoast region), had been killed and that the *dux* (Duke) Fullofaudes had been captured.

Valentinian quickly sent Severus to 'set right the disasters'. Severus informed the emperor that more troops were needed before being recalled. Jovinus was sent with a larger force, and at this point there is the *lacuna* in the text. This is usually ignored. It is large enough to contain two personal names, and suggests that Jovinus sent two of his officials back to Valentinian with a request for reinforcements.⁸

Chafing at the delay in his proposed campaign, Valentinian recalled Jovinus, and Theodosius was chosen to be sent to Britain as quickly as possible. It is almost certain that Valentinian believed that Jovinus was the most talented general at his disposal and so wanted him to be available for the campaign across the Rhine, not for a 'mopping-up' operation in the north.

From other notices, especially the *Codex Theodosianus*, it is possible to recover some dates for Valentinian's movements, and these can theoretically be combined with Ammianus' account to give a more detailed narrative. In detail, on 3 June Valentinian was still in Rheims.⁹ At an unknown date he moved the court to Amiens, but then fell ill and spent a long time recovering from a near-death experience. On 24 August he had Gratian proclaimed as emperor, whilst still in Amiens. Then, at another unknown date, Valentinian set out from Amiens and on the way to Trier he was informed of a barbarian invasion of Britain (see Map 11).

Unfortunately, on close inspection there are several elements of this tale which are unclear and make little sense, either logically or chronologically. Firstly, as already noted, on 3 June 367 Valentinian is attested as being at Rheims, no doubt planning the upcoming campaign against the Alamanni. Yet for an unknown reason he suddenly decided to travel 100 miles away from the frontier to Amiens. Later, on his return to the northern frontier, he is informed of a major barbarian assault on Britain.

Several historians have demonstrated that, although they accept that Ammianus' description of events is close to the truth, when combined with the dating it is not viable.¹⁰ It is impossible chronologically for Valentinian to have been informed of the attack on Britain on his return journey to Trier and to have sent two separate campaigns to Britain before weather in the English Channel halted movement by sea. They conclude that Ammianus was mistaken and Valentinian was still in Rheims when he received reports from Britain of the barbarian attacks and the collapse of the defences and propose that his move to Amiens was to place him closer to Britain so that he could be kept abreast of developments quickly.

Ammianus and Modern Analysis

Yet on such a straightforward and important point it is hard to believe that Ammianus has given the wrong information. Fortunately, an examination of Ammianus offers a solution to the dilemma. The main thrust of modern

analysis is that the information given by Ammianus is accurate and that all of the events quoted in the passage above took place in Britain.

This is not necessarily the case. For example, Ammianus reports the deaths of Nectaridus and possibly of Fullofaudes.¹¹ Nectaridus is described as the *comes maritime tractus* (commanding general of the seacoast region), and Fullofaudes is described as a *dux* (duke), a common title given by Ammianus to a military commander, not to a specific post.¹² These two commands have been transformed by later historians into the *comes litoris Saxonici per Britannias* (Count of the Saxon Shore) and the *comes Britanniae* (Count of Britain), as described by the *Notitia Dignitatum*.

However, not only is the *Notitia Dignitatum* later in date, but it is the only historical source for the 'Count of the Saxon Shore', and so the designation is not as secure as is often believed. Looked at in isolation from the *Notitia Dignitatum*, it is possible to theorize that neither of these men had been stationed in Britain at the time of their deaths. Later in the narrative Ammianus tells of extensive barbarian raids along the Gallic coast.¹³ It is more likely that Nectaridus and Fullofaudes were killed by Saxon and Frankish raiders along the coast of Gaul, rather than by enemies in Britain.

This implies that neither Severus nor Jovinus were actually sent to Britain, a theory reinforced by the chronology. It is hardly possible that in the few weeks between his moving the court to Amiens and the onset of bad weather in the English Channel in September that: Valentinian had heard of the news in Britain; he had sent Severus to reconnoitre the situation; Severus had reported back; Valentinian had gathered troops and supplies (no doubt located near the Alamannic frontier) and sent Jovinus to Britain; Jovinus had spent time assessing the situation before sending officers with a request for reinforcements; these men had had the time to return from Britain to report to the emperor; and an order was sent to Jovinus and that he was able to return to Court before the onset of winter.

Furthermore, if the emperor's move from Reims to Amiens had been to keep abreast of movements in Britain, he would have been better off moving to Boulogne, on the coast: after all, he knew from the arrival of the Alamannic envoys that they were not planning on invading the empire again and that they wanted peace rather than a continuation of the war. He need not have remained so close to the Alamannic frontier. There was no need for Valentinian to place so much distance between himself and his generals in Britain.

Supporting this alternative take on events is the supposition that Valentinian would have sent Jovinus, his most capable commander, to Britain without enough troops to master the situation after being told of the severity of the situation by Severus. It is also surprising that Jovinus would have been recalled from Britain and a new army mustered under the command of Theodosius, when it would have been easier and quicker simply to send additional troops to Britain.

The 'Barbarian Conspiracy': an Alternative Chronology

With these considerations in mind it is possible to propose an alternative chronology that fits with the reported facts and also takes into account the difficulties of communication in the ancient world.

In June 367 Valentinian was informed of Saxon and Frankish raids along the coast of Gaul, and that Nectaridus and Fullofaudes had been killed in Gaul and their forces dispersed. Before the advent of modern communications, news was often garbled and confused, so it was rare for emperors to commit reserves on first reports of trouble, unless the source was trusted. As a result, Severus was given a small force and ordered to gather information and, if possible, to regroup the defeated forces and counter the Saxon and Frankish raids.

Uncertain as to what was happening on the coast of Gaul, Valentinian moved to Amiens in order to be able to gather intelligence and so coordinate a response to the attacks.¹⁴ This would be near enough to the theatre of operations that he would be quickly informed of events, but not so near as to place him in personal danger from roving barbarian warbands. Unfortunately, Severus returned with the news that a larger force was needed to restore the situation on the coast.¹⁵

Still thinking of the possibility of launching an attack on the Alamanni in 367, Valentinian ordered Jovinus, his favourite general, to take part of the field army to repel the invaders and restore Imperial control of the coast and the frontier. Arriving on the scene, Jovinus began the task of expelling the barbarians.¹⁶

In the meantime, Valentinian fell ill and with Jovinus away he promoted Severus to be *magister peditum*, probably with orders to support Valentinian's son Gratian should the worst happen and Valentinian die.¹⁷ Thankfully for Valentinian, he recovered, but this was the second time in three years that he had been seriously ill. Valentinian took immediate steps to ensure that Gratian would be safe should the worst happen. On 24 August 367 Gratian was acclaimed Augustus by the troops at Amiens. The Valentinian dynasty was assured. It is certain that throughout this period Jovinus was sending reports to Valentinian concerning his successes in repelling the barbarian attacks on the coast, and secure in the knowledge that the coast was secure Valentinian gave orders that the court was to move to Trier, possibly in the hope that a token campaign could still be mounted against the Alamanni.

En route, Valentinian received messengers from Jovinus. Forces from Scotland and Ireland had invaded Britain in large numbers and were roaming the countryside at will. Jovinus had received reports on the coast and had immediately sent back two trusted officers – whose names are lost in the *lacuna* – with the news that he needed more troops in order to cross the English Channel and restore the situation in Britain.

The collecting of reliable intelligence was always a problem for Roman emperors, and by sending two important and trustworthy individuals Jovinus

was ensuring that Valentinian received the most reliable, up-to-date reports that he could give. These men arrived as the court was returning to Trier.¹⁸ The messengers also reported that not only had Britain been invaded, but the British army had deserted, been defeated or refused to fight the invaders roaming the countryside. What was needed was a strong commander who could take control of the situation and bring the island back under imperial control. Jovinus assumed, as the highest-ranking commander available to Valentinian, that he would be given reinforcements and ordered to restore yet another perilous situation.

The news finally halted any chance that Valentinian had of invading Alamannic territory in 367. He couldn't leave Britain in the hands of the barbarians, but he was unwilling to risk sending a relief campaign so late in the year, since the weather in the English Channel would make crossing dangerous and he could not afford to lose troops in a maritime disaster. At a similar time of year Julius Caesar had twice been affected by storms during his two invasions of Britain, so caution was needed. Instead, Valentinian was forced to accept that he needed to gather more troops and prepare for campaigns on two fronts in 368, one in Germania and one in Britain. Meanwhile, Jovinus was left to finish his campaign in Gaul, and it would appear that the campaign was a success.¹⁹ Any further military activity would have to wait until the following year.

Religious Unrest

As if the ongoing wars in the West were not enough for Valentinian, the religious dispute in Rome over who was to be Bishop (Pope) raised its head again. In 366 a man named Ursinus had failed in the episcopal elections in Rome, being defeated by Damasus and forced to leave the city, although claiming victory. He now appealed to Valentinian for support. Valentinian, believing that pragmatism was still the best way forward, ordered that Ursinus be allowed to return to Rome and that the matter should be settled once and for all, although he refrained from taking any specific side himself. Unfortunately, the attempt to have the citizens of Rome reach a reasoned decision failed: there was a renewal of the riots of the previous year and in late 367 Ursinus was again expelled.²⁰ In frustration, at some point in 368 Valentinian would banish Ursinus by Imperial Decree, ending the conflict once and for all.

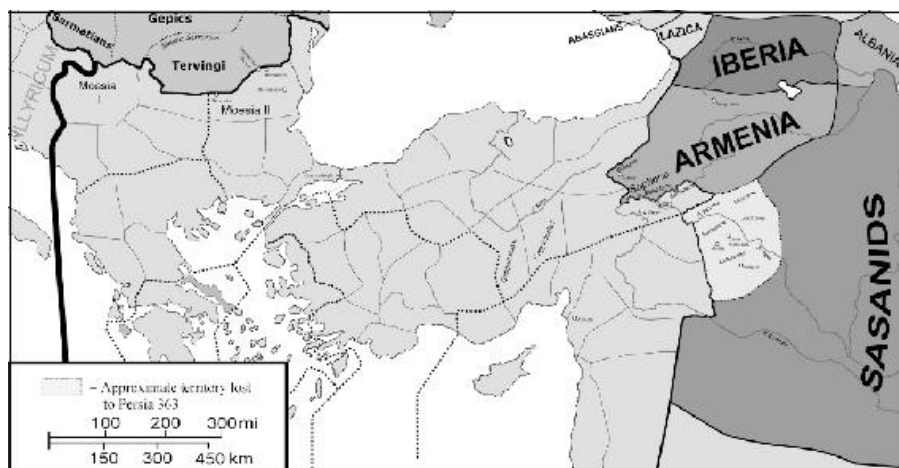
THE EAST

The Goths²¹

As with the Alamanni, the political and social nature of Gothic society is poorly reported and not completely understood. There appear to have been two major 'confederations' of Goths – the Greuthungi in the east and the Tervingi in the west. The Tervingi appear to have occupied the old Roman province of Dacia, whereas the Greuthungi occupied the lands from the River

Dniester eastwards to the River Don and north towards Kiev.²² Our knowledge of Gothic affairs relates almost wholly to the Tervingi: the Greuthungi did not share a long contiguous border with the Empire, and until later they did not constitute the same threat as that perceived from the Tervingi, who shared a long common border with Rome.

It would appear that, although they had moved into lands previously dominated by nomadic tribes, and had expanded their sphere of influence over other such tribes, the Greuthungi had not changed their own lifestyles to match that of their neighbours: the Greuthungi in the Ukraine were ‘unquestionably farmers’, not nomads.²³ The one aspect of their lives that had changed was their greater use of cavalry. Although still in general a preserve of the wealthy and powerful amongst the Tervingi, access to the steppes had allowed a far greater number of Greuthungi to own horses, as these were far more common – and so cheaper – in this area than in the more wooded west. It would also appear that many tribes of the Greuthungi, lacking extremely close contact with Rome, retained for far longer a ‘centralized monarchy’ when compared to their western relatives, although the evidence is sparse and open to interpretation: it is possible that their political organization was closer to that of the Tervingi than commonly accepted.²⁴



Map 13. The East 367.

More information is available on the Tervingi, although this is from Roman sources and so Roman stereotypes need to be extracted from these sources before they can be used. It would appear that Tervingian society was based on ‘tribal’ (German *kuni*, Greek *phylae*, Roman *pagi*) loyalties, each of which comprised an unspecified number of villages.²⁵ Each village within the tribe had its own ‘councils’, where every man had the right to speak.

These tribes were each ‘ruled’ by men called by the sources ‘*megistanes*’/‘*megastanes*’ (‘grandees’, ‘magnates’: other Roman terms for

these leaders include *regalis*, *regulus*, *archon* and *basiliskos*²⁶); the German word appears to have been *reiks*.²⁷ These men came together to make decisions which affected the whole of Tervingian society.²⁸ Despite the democratic nature of village life, the *megistanes* were the ultimate decision makers and had the right to overrule village councils if they so desired.

The *megistanes* dominated local affairs and could co-operate for either mutual defence or to have greater forces available for raids on either the Empire or other tribes. However, in times of danger they could co-operate to form a confederacy, and at these times the *megistanes* elected an individual to coordinate their military efforts, although he still remained subservient to the council of the *megistanes* in other areas. This man is normally called *iudex* or *dikastes* (judge) in the Roman sources; the German title is unknown.²⁹ Although sometimes called *rex* or 'king' by both ancient and modern historians, this is misleading: the judge did not have total control over his followers and remained subservient to the council of *megistanes*.

It is possible that prior to the mid-fourth century these judges were elected in pairs, possibly to ensure that no one man became too powerful and dominated tribal society.³⁰ In the face of another major conflict with the Empire, and after they had sent men to help Procopius in 364, the *megistanes* decided to elect a single man to the post of judge. Possibly in 364, but definitely at some point between 364 and 367, they elected a man named Athanaric to be the confederate leader.³¹ Athanaric was to lead the Tervingi throughout their wars with Valens.

Although it may appear surprising that the Tervingi would elect an individual to sole military leadership, circumstances in the mid-fourth century made the choice inevitable. The large periods of peace between 332 and 367, coupled with the increase in trade – especially in grain and other foodstuffs – may have caused a mini population explosion in Tervingian territory. When, in 365, trade was halted by the outbreak of war, Athanaric and his fellow leaders soon found that Roman trade had become 'fundamental to the very existence of [Tervingian] society'.³² The population had outgrown the ability of its own subsistence-level agriculture to support it. Furthermore, the more privileged members of Tervingian society had become accustomed to the availability of luxury goods from the empire, such as pottery, glass and wine, whether through normal trade routes or whether given to the *megistanes* as 'gifts' by the empire.

It is usually accepted that when the Goths supported Procopius during his rebellion they were acting according to their treaty of 332, reinforcing their special bond with the House of Constantine, but in reality this is not necessarily the case.³³ There can be little doubt that after 337 and the death of Constantine there was a constant need, as new emperors were crowned, to revise and renegotiate the terms of the agreement. These may have included a relaxation of the harsh terms of the Treaty of 332, as well as revisions to the agreement to supply troops to the Roman army on request.³⁴ In fact, far from

there being a ‘special bond between the Goths and the Constantinian dynasty’, evidence suggests that there was a growing friction between the Goths and Rome throughout the mid-fourth century (see below). There may even have been a Gothic invasion of Imperial territory in 348/349. Furthermore, following the unexpected death of Constantius II when he was preparing to fight Julian, the Goths – who had supported Constantius – sent envoys to Julian complaining about the problems they were facing due to fulfilling their sworn obligations to Rome, especially when deciding which ‘emperor’ to support when it was ‘Constantinian facing Constantinian’.³⁵ Far from accepting their claims, Julian was considering a campaign against the Goths after the upcoming invasion of Persia: Julian did not necessarily see the Goths as allies bound to Rome by a previous treaty.³⁶

The Goths and Christianity

The supply of luxury goods is one of the many tactics which the Romans used in order to foster closer relations and a measure of dependence on the barbarian tribes along the frontiers. Another method, which was slowly coming to the fore, was religion. The Alamanni had yet to accept Christianity and remained ‘solidly and unsophisticatedly pagan’ – ‘Christianity did not penetrate Alamannic society to a significant degree until the seventh century’.³⁷ In contrast, the Goths had begun to accept Christianity as early as the late third century.³⁸ The change had been promoted, probably at the beginning of the 330s, when a man named Ulfila had been appointed bishop to the Goths ‘under imperial auspices’.³⁹ Although the exact nature of his appointment is unclear – whether he was to preach only to already converted Goths or was appointed as bishop with the remit to convert the whole Gothic ‘nation’ is unknown – this marks a new approach for the newly Christian empire.

Ulfila was the grandson of a Cappadocian Christian who had been captured by the Goths and taken into captivity. Before his appointment he appears to have begun to convert many of the lower-class Goths to Christianity, and during the early to mid-340s he was supported in large part by Emperor Constantius II. Understandably, the conversion of many Goths to Christianity was resented by the pagan leaders. The *megistanes* would have been extremely concerned over the spread of Christianity for several reasons: for example, they may have seen the conversion as a debasement of their own religion, or have been worried about village-level religious disturbances between Pagans and Christians.

Politically, there was a further major factor which had to be taken into account by the Gothic leaders. By the middle of the fourth century, the ‘Christianisation of a peripheral [i.e. peoples on the Roman borders] ... resulted in political alliance or subordination [to Rome]’.⁴⁰ For example, included in the treaty forced upon Jovian by the Persians had been a clause severing Roman political ties with Arshak II of Armenia.⁴¹ Since Arshak was

a Christian, it is clear that his religion tied him closely to the Roman Empire, the main source of Christian knowledge and beliefs, and Shapur was keen to break these ties.

Another worry would have been concern over the tribal loyalties of the Christianized Goths.⁴² The spread of Christianity was a sure sign of the expansion of Roman influence within *Gothia* and the *megistanes* would be uncertain as to whether the converts would respond to appeals from the Roman Emperor – their Christian leader – or maintain their loyalty to the pagan chiefs within *Gothia*. Although the adoption of Christianity may have resulted in preferential treatment from the emperor for the converted, it is likely that even at this early date many leaders amongst the Goths believed that to accept Christianity was to accept the spiritual, and hence the political, leadership of Rome.

Although the conversions should have benefited the Empire, there was a problem for future Romano-Gothic relations: Constantius II and possibly Bishop Ulfila were not Catholic Christians, following the Nicene Creed, but Arians. The slow conversion of the Goths to what would later be classed as a heretical form of Christianity would be the source of trouble and confusion in the future. For the present, the slow conversion process could be seen as beneficial, since Valens too was nominally a follower of the Arian tradition.

The conversion of many Goths to Christianity was, therefore, fraught with difficulties. Tensions between the Gothic Pagan leaders and the Gothic Christians had first come to a head in the mid 340s. At about the same time it is possible that there was a little-known conflict between the Goths and the Romans. As already noted, according to hints in a speech by Libanius, there was a Gothic invasion of the Empire when Constantius II was in the East facing Persia in either 348 or 349. Constantius was forced to sue for peace on Gothic terms, since he was heavily involved in the East and unable to spare time on the Danubian frontier. It would appear that the Goths had declared war at around the same time as a major persecution of the Gothic Christians (at this time led by Ulfila) was launched.⁴³ It is tempting to link the two events, seeing the war as being provoked by Gothic feelings of Roman encroachment with the spread in *Gothia* of Christianity, although it should be noted that this is highly speculative.

What is certain is that Ulfila and his followers suffered during the persecution, with many Christians being martyred.⁴⁴ Ulfila himself,

having completed seven years in the office of bishop, was driven out by the vehemently threatening persecution from the country of the barbarians with a great host of confessors onto Roman soil and here honourably received by the Prince Constantius.

Auxentius 29 (Trans. Marchand)

Ulfila and his followers were settled around the city of Nicopolis in Moesia.⁴⁵ Although no longer living inside *Gothia*, it is likely that Ulfila still exercised

at least some influence over Christians who had remained in or returned to Gothic territory, although the strength and depth of his contacts are unknown.⁴⁶ It is possible, though improvable, that the main cause of the unrest and the persecutions was the growth in popularity and power of Ulfila himself, and that in this he was seen as an agent of Rome. Despite the persecution, Christianity remained a problem for the Goths, and it is certain that the number of conversions rose again after the persecutions had finished. By 365 there were again a large number of Christians distributed amongst the Pagan majority. This would prove a major factor in later events.

The Gothic Campaign

Over the winter of 366–367 Valens was busy overseeing preparations for his attack on the Tervingi, as part of which he replaced Sallustius as Praetorian Prefect with the more dynamic Ausonius, whose task was to base himself in Marcianople (Devnja) in Lower Moesia in order to organize the supplies needed for the upcoming campaign.⁴⁷ He also began a building program aimed at founding and upgrading fortifications along the Danube.⁴⁸ Finally, according to Ammianus at the beginning of spring, but according to the *Codex Theodosianus* after 30 May,⁴⁹ he built a ‘bridge of boats across the River Hister’ (Danube) unopposed at Constantinia Daphne⁵⁰ in Moesia and advanced into *Gothia*, possibly using the roads built during the Roman occupation of Dacia in the process.⁵¹ Unsurprisingly, the Goths, aware of the upcoming campaign, had gathered their peoples and flocks and fled to the safety of the *montes Serrorum*, probably the range now known as Siriul in the south-eastern Carpathians.⁵²

At this point Valens may have employed the standard Roman strategy of *vastatio* – ‘ravaging’ the fields and crops of the Tervingi and pillaging their territory. Although this would be likely to cause starvation and hence disease amongst the subsistence-farming Tervingi, it would not result in the glorious victory expected of a Roman Emperor.⁵³

Realizing that he was in danger of achieving nothing politically, Valens ordered Arintheus, the Eastern *magister peditum*, to scour the countryside in the hope of capturing at least some of the Tervingi.⁵⁴ He may even have offered a reward of a fixed sum of gold for every Tervingian head delivered.⁵⁵ Arintheus succeeded, and with only a few captives as a reward for the campaign, Valens returned to Roman territory, where the prisoners could be displayed as proof of his success.

By late September he was back in Durostorum.⁵⁶ Although the campaign appeared to have achieved little, the attack disrupted the Gothic harvest and, with the loss of their own grain, with supplies from the Empire cut off and with the coming of winter, the over-populated Goths began to feel the first signs of famine.

Persia

In the east, Shapur’s policy of combining force and bribery began to have an

effect. It is possibly at this time that the nobles of Ingilene and Anzitene changed their allegiance, throwing in their lots with Shapur.⁵⁷ Of far more importance, however, was the defection of the *naxarar* (hereditary lord) of Sophene, Meruzan Arkruni, who disavowed Arshak and declared his loyalty to Shapur. In the course of his defection he broke with his Christian faith and became a convert to Mazdaism (Zoroastrianism).⁵⁸

Shapur was now aware of events within the Roman Empire, and knew that, at least for a short time, he had a free hand in the east. With the defection of many of Arshak's lords, he decided to strike into Armenia in the hope of gaining control of the whole country.

Unaware of the defections, but aware of the impending attack, Arshak remained in the south of Armenia. Shapur was able to send his forces through Ingilene and Sophene into the heart of Armenia before Arshak could take steps to stop him.⁵⁹ Shapur plundered large areas of Armenia, penetrating as far as Ani (Kemah) in Akilisene, where he desecrated the tombs of the Armenian kings.⁶⁰ However, he withdrew as Arshak moved north to confront him. Despite this, the damage to Arshak's prestige was done: most of the Armenian *nakharars* now defected to Shapur, and Arshak, bowing to the inevitable, late in 367 finally capitulated and sent word to Shapur that he was willing to abandon his alliance with Rome.⁶¹ Invited to a banquet, he was taken to a 'secret rear door; there, after his eyes had been gouged out, he was bound in silver chains ... and banished to a fortress called Agabana'.⁶² According to Ammianus, he was then tortured and executed, but Faustus claims that he was kept in prison until the 370s, after which he managed to commit suicide.⁶³

With the blinding and imprisonment of Arshak, Arshak's wife, Paranjem, and their son and heir, Pap, retreated to the fortress of Artogerassa with the imperial treasury. Shapur responded immediately by sending a force to besiege the fortress.⁶⁴ He also appointed a mixture of Armenian *nakharars* and Persian administrators (*marzban*) to administer Armenia. It appears that his intention was completely to suppress Armenian ties to the Arsacid dynasty, so removing Armenia as a separate 'kingdom'.⁶⁵

Apart from the fortress, Armenia seemed to be securely in the hands of Shapur. However, over the winter of 367–368, two of the Armenian nobles who had supported Shapur again changed sides, helping Arshak's son Pap to escape from the besieged castle, although his mother remained in the besieged fortress.⁶⁶ It is clear that, despite the Persian invasion, the Armenian nobles wanted to follow traditional Armenian policy, playing the Romans and the Persians off against each other. Accordingly, and having nowhere else to go, Pap evaded pursuit and headed towards the Roman Empire.

Not content with his success in Armenia, Shapur appears to have led his forces north and also invaded Iberia. The pro-Roman King Sauromaces was deposed and his cousin, Aspacures, was installed as king. The act was most likely in contravention of the Treaty of 363, but as Valens was still focused on

affairs on the Danube Shapur appears to have assumed – correctly – that there would be no Roman response to his actions. No doubt he hoped that the Romans, although aggrieved, would be in no position to overturn the fait accompli.

Unaware of these developments in the East, and with the campaign season of 367 over, both Valentinian and Valens began their preparations for the campaigns in the upcoming year. Valens, planning to renew the attacks on the Goths, moved to Marcianople, whilst Valentinian had decisions to make regarding both the Alamanni and the situation in Britain.⁶⁷

THE WEST

Over the winter months of 367–368 Valentinian organized the troops and the accompanying logistics for a two-front war against Rome's enemies in the West. The first attack was to be a campaign to restore order in Britain. It was to be led by the *comes* (Count) Theodosius. The second was to be an invasion of Alamannic territory led in person by the emperor, accompanied by his young son Gratian.

The War in Britain and the '*Barbarica Conspiratio*' (Barbarian Conspiracy)¹

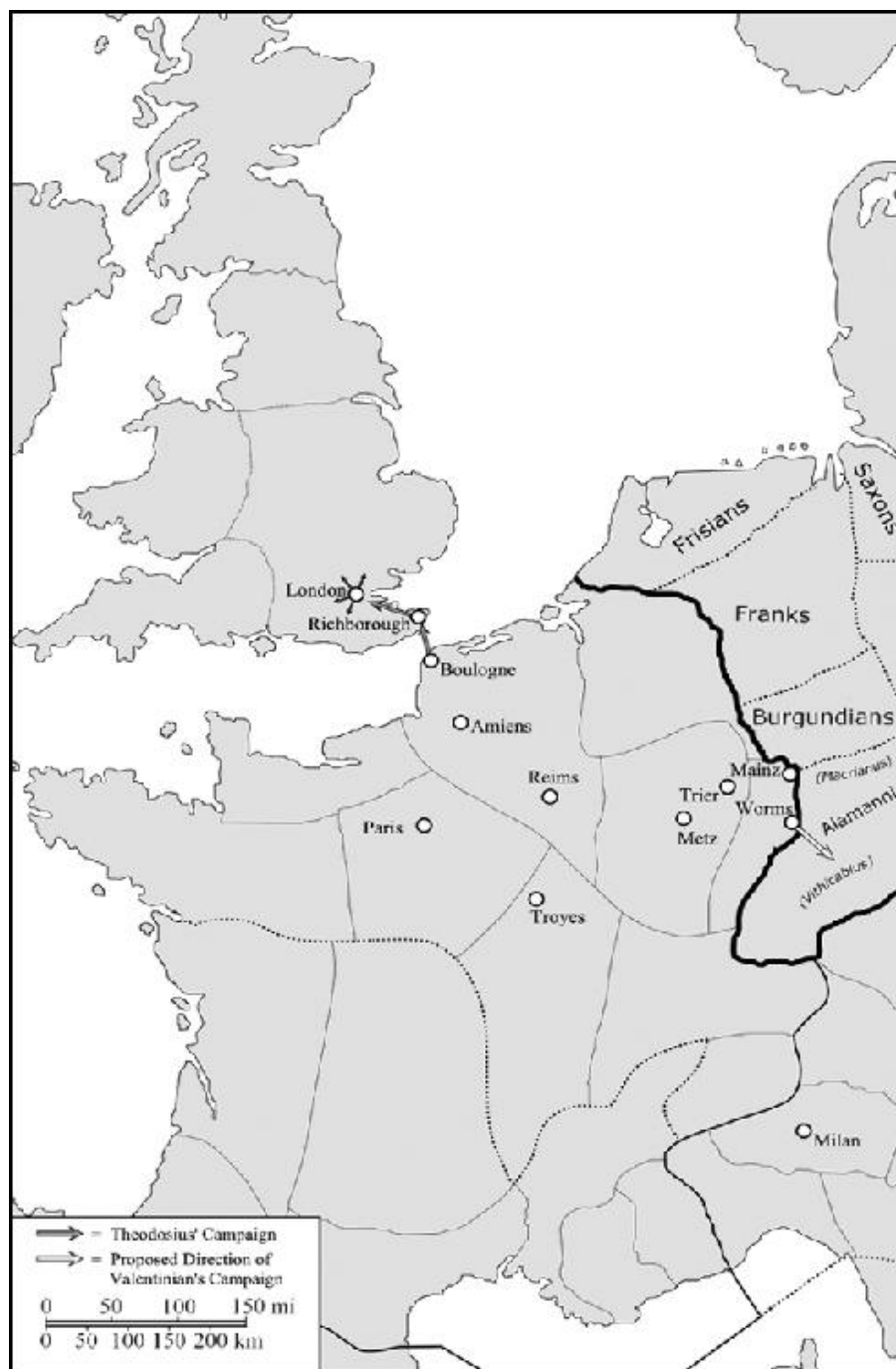
The only information we have concerning the early life of the *comes rei militaris* (Count of the Military) Theodosius is that he was born in Spain.² He is first mentioned by Ammianus – at least, in the surviving text – with reference to his appointment to command the campaign to reconquer Britain.³ It is clear that prior to his appointment to such an important military enterprise Theodosius must have been well known to Valentinian and that his military ability was respected, but unfortunately how he had earned such respect is unknown.

When Theodosius was told he was to command in Britain it was already too late in the campaign season to organize the transport and logistics needed to support a major military enterprise across the Channel. Instead, Theodosius appears to have remained for a time with the emperor, possibly discussing and debating alternate strategies for the forthcoming campaign.⁴

Early in 368 Theodosius travelled with his troops to Bononia (Boulogne). According to Ammianus these included the Batavi, the Heruli, the Iovii and the Victores from the *comitatenses*.⁵ However, rather than waiting, Theodosius took advantage of a break in the winter weather to cross the Channel, landing at Rutupiae (Richborough), leaving the troops in Boulogne to await clearer weather.⁶

His decision to cross unsupported may appear surprising, but is indicative of superior military ability: contrary to modern expectations, not all Roman military commanders would have decided to risk making a reconnaissance in person in this manner. Theodosius would have known from intelligence sources on the island that the environs of Richborough were safe from attack in winter. Furthermore, by crossing the Channel early, he would be able to

gain vital information at first hand and so be able to decide on what measures to take earlier than if he had waited with the troops in Gaul, relying on agents or subordinates for information. As a result, when the troops finally caught up with him, he would not need to waste time deciding upon his course of action.



In Richborough Theodosius found that the troops stationed in Britain had either refused to fight against what may have been superior numbers, or had been on furlough when the invasion had begun and had not risked returning to their units due to fear of attack, or had simply deserted.⁷ Why they had chosen to desert is unknown. The simplest factor may have been that the defences had been overwhelmed and that the local military commanders had fled: although usually thought of as a single province, in reality there were three provinces in Britain, each with its own military and civil commands. The divided military command on the island doubtless created confusion and hindered the Romans' ability to deal with the invaders from a position of strength.⁸ Furthermore, local military commanders may have been of poor quality, leading the troops to believe that desertion was better than being led to certain defeat. In these circumstances, it is unsurprising that the ordinary soldiers had flown.

On the other hand, although an unsupported hypothesis, it is tempting to suggest that a further factor in the decision of the troops to desert was lack of pay. Earlier, in 364–365, Valentinian had sent Palladius to Africa to investigate barbarian attacks. The fact that Palladius had been given the wages due to the African troops suggests that Valentinian had not yet paid the army in Africa, doubtless due to the empire's economic crisis. In addition, later, in 405, the troops in Britain rebelled and one of the main causes may have been a lack of pay.⁹

In the early 360s the focus of succeeding emperors had remained upon the East, and when Valentinian had come to the throne he had been informed that the Empire was close to bankruptcy. As a distant province relatively free from attack, when finances were poor it would always be tempting to withhold pay from the troops in Britain, since they were isolated, and although there remained the possibility of rebellion it could be contained within the island as long as the troops in Gaul remained loyal. In this way, money would be available to pay the troops with the emperor, ensuring their devotion.

Theodosius also discovered that the invaders in Britain, unhampered by Roman forces, were wandering the countryside in small groups, plundering at will. This would have caused problems for Theodosius. Small groups could easily be defeated, but scattered around the countryside they would be harder to find. On the other hand, although a larger force would be easier to locate, the outcome of a battle would be harder to predict, and once the invaders knew that a strong Roman force had landed in Britain they would almost certainly attempt to coalesce into a larger force in the interests of self-defence. Theodosius would have to find a solution to the problems if he was to evict the enemy from Britain.

Accordingly, when the troops finally did cross the Channel with the onset of clear, spring weather, Theodosius had already made his plans. Once the troops had landed and all of the arrangements had been made, Theodosius

quickly led his men towards London in order to re-establish Imperial control of the largest city on the island.¹⁰ The city would act as a centre for his operations, since from London he could establish a wide sphere of control, and his speedy arrival would mean that the enemy would remain unaware of its peril. Furthermore, logistically the food stores in London were large and capable of supporting the army that had just crossed the Channel.

Once in London, Theodosius made his plans for the next phase of the operations. He divided his troops into smaller forces and sent them to attack the marauding bands of barbarians within easy reach of the city. In that way, he could overcome the small enemy forces easily whilst retaining a centre of operations to which the troops could retire quickly should the enemy coalesce into a larger army.

Fortunately for Theodosius, and largely due to the speed at which he had moved, the news of his arrival does not appear to have spread, and so his men were able to intercept large numbers of enemy raiding parties, relieving them of their booty, cattle and prisoners. Most of the goods were returned to their owners, although a percentage was retained to help ease the problems of supplying the troops. No doubt it was at this time that messengers were sent throughout Britain offering pardons to deserters and ordering the army of Britain, including the troops on furlough, to make their way to London.¹¹

Although these activities were successful, they all took time, and as winter approached Theodosius gave thought for the following year's campaign. Accordingly, he sent messengers to Valentinian asking for the dispatch of a man named Civilis to be the new *vicarius* for Britain, as well as for another military commander by the name of Dulcitius. With these matters settled, Theodosius awaited the campaign season of 369, doubtless using the time to organize relief for the people of Britain in the areas which he had restored to Imperial rule.

The Alamannic Campaign, 368

Whilst Theodosius was campaigning in Britain, Valentinian prepared for his own campaign against the Alamanni. As was noted earlier, at this time the Alamanni were 'ruled' by two kings, the pro-Roman Macrianus in the 'north' and the anti-Roman Vithicabius in the 'south'. It is clear that Valentinian was preparing to attack the southern Alamanni, but he was not prepared to rely on brute force alone: many attempts had been made either to convert Vithicabius to a pro-Roman stance, or to deliver Vithicabius into Roman hands.¹² These had always failed, but Valentinian still sent agents into Alamannic territory in the hope of having Vithicabius eliminated.

With his northern flank secured by the treaty with Macrianus, Valentinian gathered his troops, including the garrisons of cities opposite the Alamanni ruled by Macrianus.¹³ He also summoned the Italian and Illyrian troops along with their commander Sebastianus, the *comes Illyricis* (Count of Illyricum), as well as ordering the gathering of a large amount of supplies to feed the troops

on campaign.¹⁴ Valentinian had amassed an ‘unusually large army’ for the attack.¹⁵ Once the troops were ready he sent an advance party across the Rhine and into Alamannic territory, preparing to follow with the main army.¹⁶ As the Romans crossed the Rhine they were unexpectedly attacked in the north: an Alamannic *regalis* (‘Prince’) named Rando, who was based in territory nominally dominated by Macrianus, had learned of the impending attack in the south. Determined to take advantage of the weakening of the defences, he had gathered a ‘light raiding party’ and ‘slipped into Mainz’, which had been left unguarded by the removal of the garrison to take part in the forthcoming campaign and which was also celebrating a festival – possibly either Easter or Whit Sunday.¹⁷

Although modern commentators usually accept that Rando entered the city itself, taking the inhabitants unawares as they celebrated the festival, this is actually unlikely: even a small number of defenders would be able to protect the city from lightly armed raiders. In this case, as in many others, it is far more likely that the attack simply entered the area surrounding and supporting the city, so allowing the attackers to retain their mobility and escape with ease before a counter attack could be organized.

Whatever the case, when news of Rando’s attack reached Valentinian, he was forced to halt the invasion in the south. Unclear as to what was happening, and fearing that Macrianus had reneged on the treaty and attacked, Valentinian awaited further intelligence. Although unattested, it is clear that messengers were sent to Macrianus and quickly returned with the news that Rando had not acted on the authority of Macrianus, and doubtless bearing apologies and possibly gifts. One of these ‘gifts’ may have been the offer to supply enough men to form two new Roman army units, the ‘Bucinobantes’ and the ‘Raetovarii’, although it should be noted that this is speculation. These two units may then have been quickly sent to Britain to reinforce Theodosius: keeping them with the main army and using them to attack their fellow tribesmen was obviously far too risky a manoeuvre to be contemplated.¹⁸

Furthermore, a fresh piece of news reached Valentinian prior to his second attempt at campaigning: his agents had succeeded in ‘convincing’ (bribing?) one of Vithicabius’ attendants to kill him.¹⁹ After awaiting a suitable opportunity, the attendant struck: he stabbed Vithicabius and fled to the Empire for safety.²⁰ With this welcome news, Valentinian again readied his troops and slowly crossed the Rhine at Worms.²¹ Determined that his army would not be taken unawares and defeated, he advanced cautiously for a few days with the army deployed in a ‘square’ formation, ready to repel attack from any direction, with himself in the centre and Jovinus and Severus commanding the flanks.²²

After a ‘lapse of several days’, it became clear that the Alamanni had retreated in the face of his attack. As a consequence Valentinian ordered the troops to pillage the area, scouring the deserted buildings and land for food, before making every effort to destroy what remained.²³ In this way

Valentinian followed traditional Roman military tradition: that of *vastatio*, the ravaging of settlements in the hope of discouraging resettlement and so creating an area along the border free from hostile occupation.

As he continued his advance he became worried about the lack of opposition and so adopted an even slower pace, not knowing when the Alamanni would launch their expected counter-assault. Fortunately, Valentinian had the experience and good sense to send out scouts in the hope of locating the enemy. These soon returned with the information that the enemy had gathered at a place called Solicinium.²⁴ Unfortunately, the location of Solicinium has been lost, and modern hypotheses on where it lay are unconvincing, largely because they do not allow for a very slow march on the part of the Romans and so place Solicinium too far into Alamannic territory.²⁵

The Alamanni had ‘occupied a lofty hill, abrupt and inaccessible in its rugged heights on every side except the north, where the ascent was gentle and easy’.²⁶ They were clearly intent upon a downhill charge against an enemy who could not bring their superior numbers to bear because of the confined nature of the chosen battlefield.

Valentinian refused to accept this strategy. Instead, leaving Gratian in a safe place under the care of the ‘legion of the Ioviani’, with only a few troops he scouted the terrain in person, hoping to find an alternative route up the steep hillsides. Unfortunately for Valentinian, he was ambushed by a band of Alamanni and was forced to seek safety by flight. In the course of the skirmish Valentinian lost both his personal attendant and his helmet, ‘adorned with gold and precious stones’.²⁷

The Battle of Solicinium

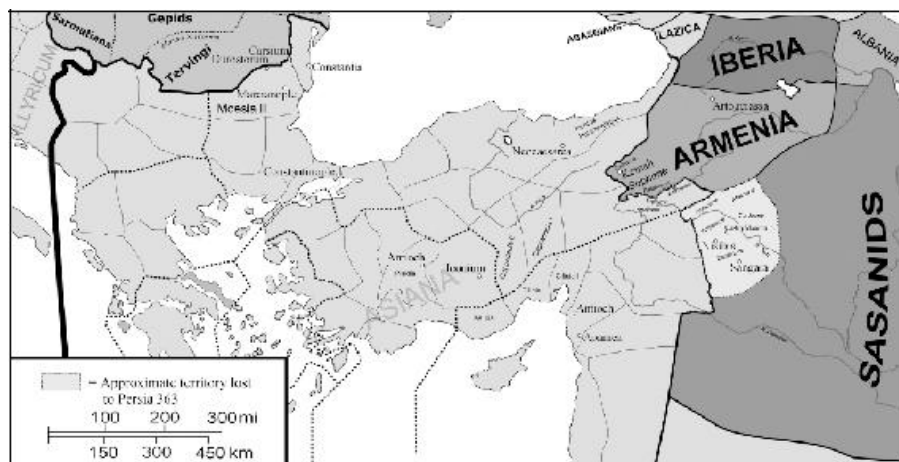
Yet in the process of scouting, Valentinian had become convinced that there was an alternative route to the top of the mountain. Accordingly, Sebastianus led the Italian and Illyrian troops to the foot of the gentle slope to the north, pinning the enemy and forcing the Alamanni to focus on them. In the meantime, the remainder of the army, led by two men named Salvius and Lupicinus, fought its way up the steep slopes to the rear of the Alamanni. Gradually the Romans forced their way to the top of the hill before bringing up reinforcements and slowly beginning to encircle the enemy. Still the Alamanni resisted until, finally, their resistance broke and they fled, pursued by the victorious Romans. Unfortunately for the Alamanni, the only escape route lay past Sebastianus at the foot of the hill. Here, many of them were slaughtered, whilst a few managed to break through and escape into the forests and marshes.²⁸

Although Valentinian had secured a victory, the nature of the terrain and the ferocity of the defence resulted in the Romans suffering ‘no inconsiderable loss’. Still, Valentinian’s ‘propaganda machine’ would turn the encounter into a decisive victory for the emperor, with enemy casualties being exaggerated and Roman losses minimized, meaning that Valentinian had now won the

battle that tradition and political considerations demanded of him. In fact, this was to be the last great victory of a Western Roman emperor across the Rhine.²⁹ After a brief rest he led the army back to Roman territory, where it was dismissed to winter quarters. Valentinian himself, accompanied by Gratian, returned to Trier.³⁰

THE EAST

In early 368 Themistius arrived in Marcianople from Constantinople. As part of the *quinquennialian* festivities celebrating Valens' five years on the throne Themistius brought the *aurum coronarium* (crown tax).³¹ On 28 March 367 Themistius also gave an oration (*Oration 8*) to celebrate the anniversary. Themistius praised Valens for his 'enlightened' tax policies, implying that Valens had drastically reduced the taxes from the high levels instigated at the start of the reign.³² Although this is usually – and at least partially correctly – associated with Valens' desire to minimize the risk of another rebellion, at least part of the reason for the easing of taxes may have been Valens' need to help those areas still suffering from the tsunami of the previous year.³³ Themistius continued his oration with the remark that the cut in taxes was more praiseworthy as the state needed these taxes in order to pay for the ongoing Gothic war.³⁴



Map 15. The East 368.

Interestingly, included in the Oration were two pieces of new information. The first was that early in the year messengers had arrived from the territories bordering Isauria, telling of Isaurian attacks on the neighbouring provinces.³⁵ Although a blow, the attacks were not as serious as the winning of the Gothic War. The second was the news that by March 367 Pap had arrived at the Roman court and was doubtless petitioning for help from Valens to regain the throne of Armenia for his dynasty. At roughly the same time news arrived that Shapur had also deposed the King of Iberia. This was disturbing intelligence

for Valens: Shapur had 'occupied most of the former Roman territories and fortresses in Mesopotamia; he had deposed the pro-Roman kings of Armenia and Iberia; he had imposed a new king in Iberia, [and begun the task of dismantling] the Arsacid kingship in Armenia'.³⁶

The terrible reports from the east made Valens reassess his position. Although he was intent on attacking the Goths again in 368, he may have been forced to accept that his war with the Goths should be secondary to his presence in the east to face both the Isaurians but especially the Persians. In the same oration in which Themistius announced the arrival of Pap at court, Themistius also appears to be preparing public opinion for a 'peace-without-victory' on the Danube.³⁷ Valens would make one last attempt at defeating the Goths before taking the army east. Unable to send help to Armenia due to the ongoing Gothic War, Valens sent Pap to Neocaesarea (Niksas, in Pontus Polemoniaca), where he was to spend the rest of 368.³⁸

It was probably prior to the move that Valens received yet more exasperating news from the east. A minor tribe living in caves near to the city of Apamea in Syria, named by Ammianus as the Maratocrupeni, had reverted to banditry and were attacking cities in the east using a mixture of force and cunning.³⁹ However serious the first reports were, it soon became clear that these amounted more to nuisance raids than to a serious threat. With the Gothic War uppermost in his mind, it is little surprise that Valens made no move to counter the Maratocrupeni, leaving local commanders to deal with the 'bandits'.

Once the celebrations were over, Valens moved his base from Marcianople to Vicus Carporum (possibly ancient Carsium).⁴⁰ From here he intended to attack the Goths for a second consecutive year. It was not to be: heavy rains in Europe caused extensive flooding of the Danube and it quickly became clear that there would be no campaigns across the river for the foreseeable future.⁴¹

Despite Ammianus' claims that Valens remained inactive for the rest of the year, other evidence shows that this was not the case.⁴² He later moved to Constantia (Tomi) and it is possibly whilst based here that he began his next step to secure the Gothic frontier.⁴³ With the army inactive on Roman territory, he put it to good use by beginning the building of a series of fortifications aimed at securing the Danubian frontier against low-key raids, although it was clear that they would only prove a minor hindrance in the case of a major Gothic invasion.⁴⁴ In the circumstances, such defensive moves were necessary: although Valens had chosen to remain on the Danube and prosecute a war against the Goths, affairs in the east were still unsettled and he needed to lead an army to the eastern frontiers in order to limit the gains being made by the Persians, especially in Armenia. For this to work he needed a secure front on the Danube.

It is sometimes suggested that Valens was subordinate in all things to Valentinian. Accordingly, the building programme begun by Valens in 368 is assumed to be following the lead set by Valentinian in the West. It is true that

the *Codex Theodosianus* has a law ordering the construction of towers in Dacia Ripensis, but this is not evidence for a major building programme: the *Codex* only orders the building of at least three new towers.⁴⁵ Other information suggests that the Western fortifications were only begun in earnest from 369, so intimating that in this sphere Valens took the lead.⁴⁶ A selection of building inscriptions from forts on the eastern frontiers, dating largely from 368 but possibly from as early as 367, implies that Valens had ordered their construction either in 366 or 367.⁴⁷ Although the project could still have been instigated by Valentinian, it is perhaps more likely that Valens had begun the building of forts earlier than his brother.

The fact that Valentinian was quick to copy Valens, coupled with the poor reputation of the latter, may have disguised the fact that in this Valens was the originator of the building policy. It is to be hoped that new archaeological evidence will demonstrate which brother made the original decision, but until then the theory remains conjectural.

It has also been proposed that the newly published *De Rebus Bellicis* encouraged Valens to begin his fortification campaign.⁴⁸ Unfortunately the dating of the *De Rebus Bellicis* is insecure, and so the assumption that Valens used the manuscript as a guide in 368 remains only an extremely doubtful possibility.⁴⁹ It is more likely that Valens simply strengthened the Danube fortifications to ensure that the Goths would face tougher defences should they invade or raid whilst the main Roman army was on the eastern frontier: strengthening the defences before shifting to the eastern campaign is a logical step.⁵⁰

Whatever the case, with his military campaign on hold, but with the fortification programme making good progress, Valens was forced to wait until the campaign season of 369 before taking further action against the Goths: he still needed to coerce the Goths into accepting a peace treaty before taking his forces east to face Shapur of Persia.

Isauria

Due to the ongoing wars, Valens had been unable to send troops to put down the Isaurian 'rebellion', as a result of which it had grown in strength.⁵¹ Although Musonius, *vicarius Asiae* (Vicar of Asia), had attempted to put down the uprising with the few troops available, the attempt had failed and the troops had been killed, no doubt increasing support for the rebels.⁵² However, once he realized that there would be no campaign on the Danube, Valens appears to have sent troops to Asia Minor to suppress the rebellion. In a very quick campaign the troops appear to have pushed the rebels back to their mountain homes, after which a truce had been agreed during which the emperor's envoys were forced to deal with the Isaurians as if they were a 'foreign people'. The survival of the bases of dedicatory statutes to Valens, Valentinian and Gratian in Cilicia, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch tells of the widespread area affected by the revolt.⁵³ Fortunately, the speed of the

campaign suggests that the rebels were defeated during the campaign season of 368, and although it is possible that a strong force was left in the area to monitor the situation, the remainder of the troops were able to return to the Danube frontier ready for the campaign season of 369.

THE WEST

Over the winter of 368–369 Symmachus arrived at court in Gaul.¹ The son of another Symmachus, who had had a distinguished career, Symmachus junior was an outstanding orator and writer and in 365 he had been Valentinian's *corrector* (governor) of Lucania and Bruttium.² As one of the leading men of the Senate, he had been chosen to deliver the Senate's address to Valentinian on the occasion of Valentinian's *quinquennalia*, a celebration held on the anniversary of the emperor's 'fifth' year on the throne.³

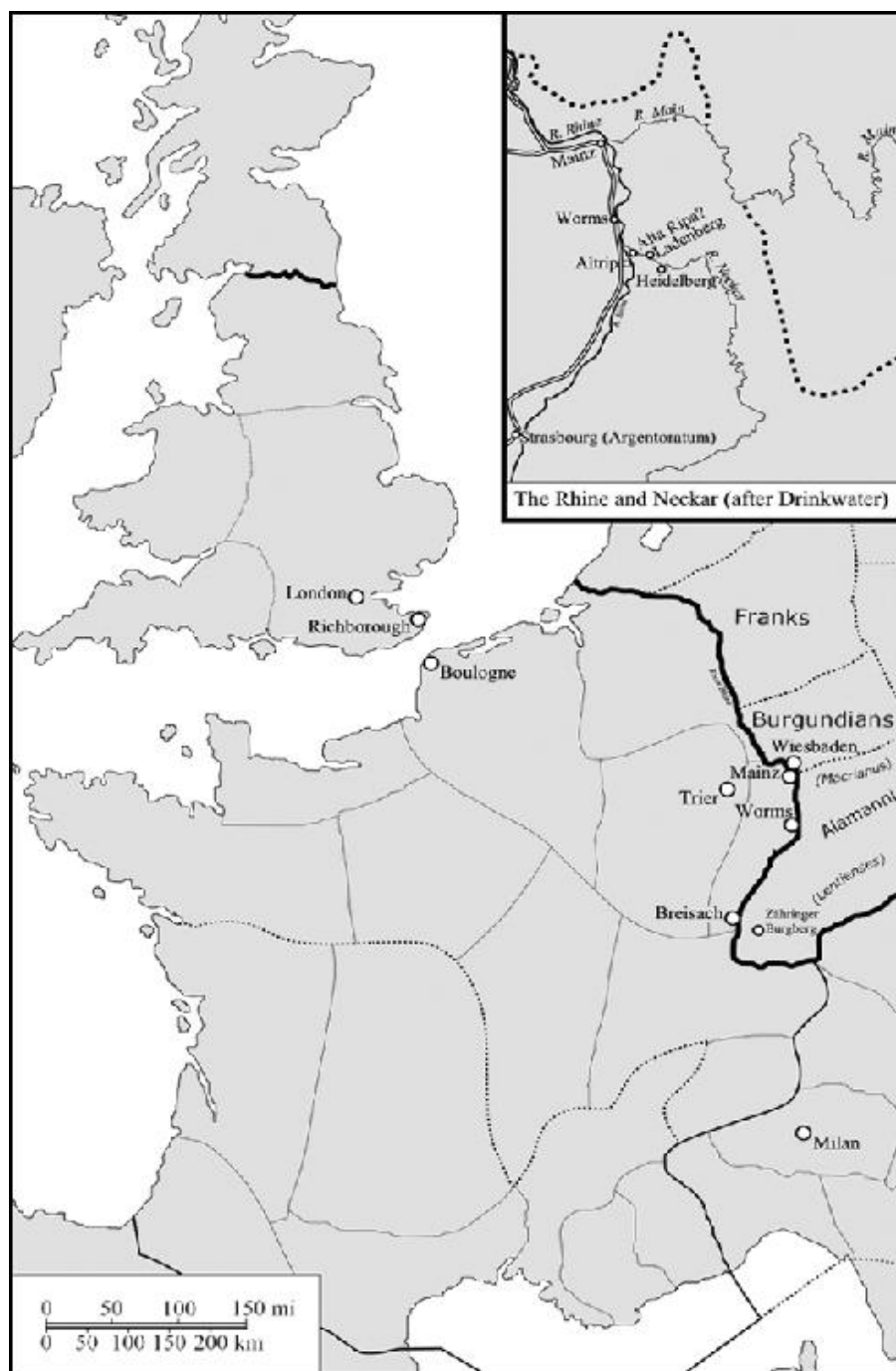
Valentinian appears to have stayed at Trier until at least mid May before beginning a new campaign against the Alamanni.⁴ Symmachus and his fellows accompanied the emperor, but the details of the campaign, as given by Symmachus, are confusing and open to interpretation and need to be analyzed before any conclusions can be reached.⁵

Probably in June, Valentinian ordered a bridge to be built across the Rhine on the northern borders with the Alamanni, possibly into areas nominally under the control of Macrianus. A small force crossed the river and established a bridgehead before the troops quickly built a pontoon bridge to allow the army to cross. However, Symmachus' description highlights the speed of the operation, the light-hearted attitude of the troops, and the fact that the bridge was 'over-engineered', suggesting that this was not simply a military operation.⁶

This conclusion is reinforced by the next event in the campaign. The troops scaled the banks near the river and 'attacked' the Alamannic village of Alta Ripa ('lofty bank', named after the rise upon which it was situated). However, rather than fleeing in panic, with the Romans attacking and killing or capturing those who did not run quickly enough, the Alamanni continued with their daily routine, even keeping their weapons.⁷

Alta Ripa was soon 'secure' and Valentinian passed a law dated 19 June whilst still in the village.⁸ After a brief pause Valentinian began the next phase of the operation. The troops, accompanied by a contingent from Alta Ripa, advanced into Alamannic territory until they reached a *colonia* abandoned when the Romans had vacated the Agri Decumates during the reign of emperor Gallienus (259–260).⁹ Here they found ruined buildings and inscriptions. Large quantities of materials were quickly gathered and taken back to Roman territory, where they were to be used to build a new fort on the

Roman side of the Rhine, which was also named *Alta Ripa*, possibly acknowledging the help given by the Alamannic villagers.



Map 16. The West 369.

Once the whole ‘campaign’ is analyzed it becomes clear that this was not a serious venture aimed at defeating the Alamanni. Instead, it is best to interpret the operation as having two aims: firstly, a propaganda exercise carried out to impress Symmachus and the other officials from the Senate who, accompanying the emperor, would be able to publish a favourable report on their return to Rome; secondly, as a way of acquiring cheap, readily available building materials for a new project.¹⁰ In fact, the description given by Symmachus of the ‘village’ of Alta Ripa suggests that it was a high-status settlement.

The fact that Alta Ripa was large and so near to the frontier implies that the local leader who ruled the area was a friend of the Romans, and it might be that this was a man named Hortarius, who had been a Roman ally since the time of Julian’s invasion of Alamannic territory in 358, following the Roman victory at the Battle of Strasbourg in 357.¹¹ It is usually accepted that Hortarius had a treaty with Rome, guaranteed by an exchange of hostages. However, another explanation is more likely. Hortarius had not signed the treaty alone: he was one of a number of local leaders who had agreed to the treaty under the leadership of Macrianus.¹²

Shortly after ‘taking part’ in the campaign, Symmachus, the main witness, was promoted to the rank of *comes tertii ordinis* (Count of the Third Order), another propaganda coup by Valentinian.¹³ Coupled with the fact that Symmachus had no actual role in the ‘attack’, this supports the concept that it was simply a propaganda exercise.

Valentinian’s Building Programme

The building material recovered from Germania was used to build a new fort in Roman territory. This was only one fort in Valentinian’s building programme along the frontier and marks the beginning of a new phase in Valentinian’s planning. As part of the programme Valentinian ordered the building of new forts, the rebuilding of old forts and city walls, and the establishment of new garrisons with which to man the new erections.¹⁴ These projects would mainly span the years 369–370, although some aspects would continue long into the new decade.

Both Valens and Valentinian built new *burgi* (watchtowers) ‘along the river frontiers, at major crossroads and at locations vulnerable to raiding’.¹⁵ Apart from their defensive qualities, these new works had an added political benefit: Valens in 368 and Valentinian in 369 had failed to lead successful major campaigns into enemy territory; the building programme could be used as a propaganda tool to show to the populace, and especially the Senates in Rome and Constantinople, that the emperors were still active and using their time constructively. The concept that the frontiers were being repaired and reinforced would make for good publicity in the heart of the empire.

Moreover, Symmachus was able to claim that the building programme was needed in order to create a new province, ‘Alamannia’.¹⁶ The concept that the

Empire was again expanding would be excellent propaganda throughout the Western Empire, encouraging stability and optimism and reducing the risk of invasion or rebellion.

Valentinian's new fortifications were built along 'the entire Rhine from the beginnings of Raetia as far as the strait of the Ocean'.¹⁷ Included in the new building programme was a 'massive defence work' now known as 'Heidenmauer' near Wiesbaden/Kastel in Germany. Although begun in June 369, it was never to be completed.¹⁸ However, although most of the new forts were built in Roman territory, Valentinian took the decision that some would be built on the Germanic side of the Rhine. One of these was built along the River Neckar, presumably near its confluence with the Rhine, and with the 'permission' of the local inhabitants, since there is no mention in Ammianus of a complaint from the Alamanni. Unfortunately, its situation was such that it was in danger of having its foundations eroded by the Neckar. It took the personal supervision of Valentinian to divert the course of the river so as to safeguard the fort.¹⁹

Despite the claims of Symmachus that *Alamannia* was to be a new Roman province, it is clear that the new forts were simply built with a view to monitoring traffic along, and barbarian crossing of, the Rhine. In this the design of the towers along the Germanic side of the river was important. They could act as observation posts to monitor the actions of the barbarians along the Rhine.²⁰ Yet the most important feature of the 'building campaign' was not simply the number of forts being built and restored; it was also the rebuilding of the Roman river fleet on the Rhine. Valentinian had quickly realized that the existence of a well-led fleet would severely restrict the ability of the Alamanni, and other barbarians, to raid the Empire unobserved and unopposed.²¹ Evidence suggests that regular boat patrols were made on the Danube from this time until 376, and were later resumed.²²

The Zähringer Burgberg

With the northern Alamanni apparently settled, Valentinian turned his attention to the south, for a short period establishing court at the town of Brisiacum (Breisach) in late August.²³

Due to the lack of detail in the surviving sources the train of events is unclear, but it would appear that Valentinian now travelled to the south of *Alamannia* and oversaw the appointment of a new 'King' to replace the assassinated Vithicabius. The name of the new ruler is unknown, but it is clear that Valentinian approved of the choice and that the new ruler was pro-Roman and would support Valentinian. In return, Valentinian ordered the refurbishment of an existing Alamannic settlement, now known as the Zähringer Burgberg. Previously the residence of an Alamannic leader, either Gundomadus or Vadomarius, the site was on top of a large hill only a small distance from the Rhine.²⁴ Under Roman guidance and with Roman help the top of the hill was levelled, with the spoil being used to increase the flat area

on the summit.²⁵ The Roman ‘conquest’ of *Alamannia* appeared to be nearing completion.

Mons Piri

Elated at the success of his building programme and the installation of a pro-Roman replacement for Vithicabius, Valentinian determined that, although it was late in the year, he would order another fort to be built on Alamannic territory, this time at Mons Piri (tentatively identified as Heidelberg). A *dux* named Arator was commanded, along with the *notarium* (secretary) Syagrius, to build the fort with all speed, since ‘deep quiet reigned everywhere’.²⁶ With his aims secured, Valentinian returned to the empire.

In the meantime, a detachment of troops began the building of the new fort. Shortly after the building had begun, Valentinian sent a *dux* named Hermogenes to take over from Aratus. Before Aratus left, some of the local Alamannic *optimates* (‘chieftains’) arrived and begged the Romans to stop building the fort, as it was against the existing treaty. Once it became clear that their complaints were being ignored, they left, ‘weeping at the fate of their sons’ – the hostages given as part of the treaty.²⁷ It quickly became apparent that they had been expecting the Roman reply: almost as soon as the *optimates* had left, Alamannic warriors emerged and slaughtered the Roman troops, including Aratus and Hermogenes. The only survivor was Syagrius, but when he returned home he was cashiered for cowardice.²⁸

Marina Severa and Justina²⁹

At some point in the mid-late 360s Marina Severa, wife of Valentinian and mother of Gratian, met Justina, daughter of a man named Justus who had been governor of Picenum under the reign of Constantius and widow of the usurper Magnentius (350–353), to whom she had been married as a young girl. Severa introduced Justina to Valentinian, who became enamoured with Justina. Probably early in 369

The emperor ... considered with himself how he could espouse Justina, without repudiating Severa, as she had borne him Gratian, whom he had created Augustus a little while before. He accordingly framed a law, and caused it to be published throughout all the cities, by which any man was permitted to have two lawful wives. The law was promulgated and he married Justina.

Socrates Scholasticus 4.31

Unfortunately, there is no other record of this law, and other sources record a different tradition, stating that Severa used her position to buy a ‘suburban estate’ for far less than it was worth. Learning of the arrangement, Valentinian ordered an investigation which found that Severa had acted unfairly, as a result of which Valentinian ‘banished Severa from the city’.³⁰

It is unclear if either of these traditions is correct and whether one is simply

the result of later invention and bias. It is possible that the story of Severa and the estate is true and was used by Valentinian as an excuse to divorce her and marry Justina. It is also possible that Socrates' claim of a new law being passed may have some historical basis, as it may have been aimed at establishing divorce within the Christian legal tradition. It is feasible that both stories bear elements of truth, and that Valentinian did indeed pass a law allowing him to divorce Severa after she had given him an excuse by buying the estate for less than it was worth. Unfortunately, unless further information comes to light, the exact course of events is likely to remain unknown.³¹

Whatever the truth, shortly after the banishment of Severa, Valentinian married Justina.³² As is usual, the date of the marriage is unknown, but as their son Valentinian (later Valentinian II) was born in 371 it is likely that it was either in 369 or 370. The fate of Justina's brother Constantianus is outlined by Ammianus in events dated to 369, possibly dating the marriage, but this may instead be an occasion where Ammianus gives a clarification of identity using a later relationship.³³

Gaul

The dating of the attack on Mons Piri is unknown, and it may only have been whilst en route or shortly after his return to Trier, where he planned to spend the winter, that Valentinian learned of the Alamannic slaughter of the troops building the fort.³⁴ It is possibly in response to the attack at Mons Piri that Valentinian made a major political decision.³⁵ Most likely in late 369, although possibly with agreement only being reached early in 370, Valentinian sent messages to the Burgundians enquiring about the possibility of combined action against the Alamanni 'ruled' by Macrianus: the Burgundians had outstanding disputes with the Alamanni over boundaries and salt mines and would make ideal allies.³⁶ This was doubtless welcome news, as it encouraged inter-tribal warfare and so freed Rome from the threat of invasion. The negotiations were progressing well before Symmachus returned to Rome.³⁷

Almost certainly after he had returned to Trier, and after he had agreed to the joint attack on Macrianus, Valentinian learned that the absence of the army on the Rhine had encouraged troubles in Gaul, and a 'frenzy for brigandage' had erupted. One of those killed was Constantianus, *tribunus stabuli* (Tribune of the Stables), brother of Justina, Valentinian's wife.³⁸ Yet there was little Valentinian could do at this time: the troops had only recently been dismissed to winter quarters and there were doubtless too few supplies to begin a new campaign in Gaul in winter. All Valentinian could do was await the spring of 370.

Over the winter of 369–370 Valentinian was informed of a minor event in Rome which was to have serious consequences with regard to the Senate. Valentinian's response coloured Ammianus' biased portrayal of events and has affected Valentinian's reputation ever since. A former *vicarius* (Deputy

Governor³⁹) named Chilo laid a complaint before Olybrius, the City Prefect, that an attempt had been made to poison him. The accused – an organ-builder named Sericus, a wrestler named Asbolius and a soothsayer named Campensis – were arrested and imprisoned. However, Olybrius was afflicted by a severe illness and the matter was put on hold into the new year.⁴⁰ The fact that a soothsayer was involved, and soothsaying that ‘harmed the State’ was illegal, would quickly elevate the investigations to an unprecedented level.

Britain

In late 368 *comes* Theodosius had issued an amnesty for those troops who had previously deserted. Over the winter of 368–369 large numbers of troops began to drift back to their units and Theodosius was able to gain vital intelligence to help with the formulation of his plans for 369.⁴¹ Yet there were two pieces of surprising and important information. One was that the local *Arcani* (possibly *agentes in rebus*, in this context the Roman ‘Secret Service’) had collaborated with the invaders. After a swift enquiry, the *Arcani* were disbanded.⁴²

The other was possibly more serious. In 368 a Pannonian named Valentinus had been accused of ‘grave crimes’ and exiled to Britain.⁴³ Once in Britain he had established contact with other exiles and planned to start a rebellion. The barbarian attacks had coincided with his decision, and doubtless many of the disgruntled troops who had reportedly ‘deserted’ had actually joined Valentinus preparatory to an insurrection. By the end of 368 Theodosius’ swift campaign had changed the dynamic and some of the troops who had joined Valentinus now returned to their loyalty, joining Theodosius in London. Informed of the plot, Theodosius sent agents to infiltrate Valentinus’ camp.

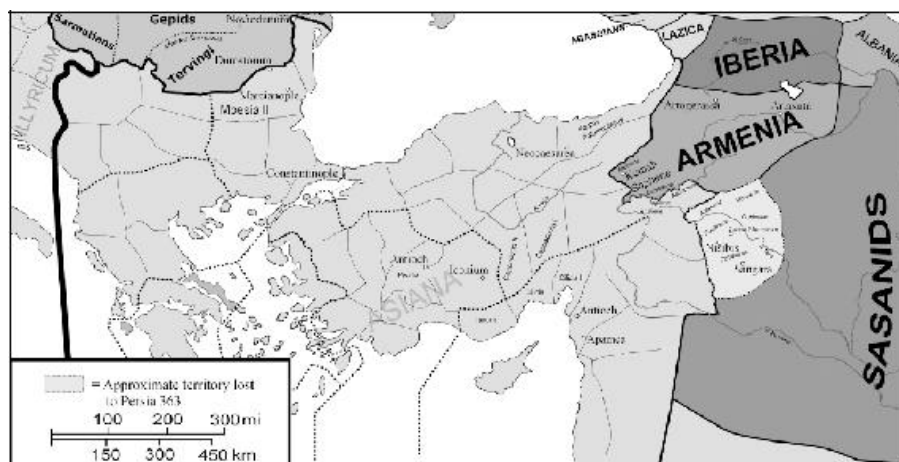
With the coming of the campaign season Theodosius left London and conducted a successful campaign, using ambushes against the invaders, and forcing any barbarians still left in the Roman provinces to leave. At the same time Theodosius led his troops against Valentinus. Valentinus and his staff were all arrested and quickly executed. Theodosius continued the campaign, restoring the ‘chief towns’ and building advanced watchtowers on the borders and coasts to guard against future attacks. With Britain ‘restored’ to the Empire, Theodosius sent a dispatch to Valentinian to inform the emperor of what he had achieved. At the same time he is said to have created a new province on the island, named Valentia, either meaning ‘Health and Strength’ or named for Valentinian himself.⁴⁴

Once the island had been fully recovered and strengthened Theodosius returned to court, where he was welcomed with joy and immediately promoted to the post of *magister equitum*, replacing Jovinus.⁴⁵

THE EAST

On 1 January 369, probably at Marcianople, Themistius gave an oration

dedicated to Valentinian Galates, Valens' son, on the occasion of his first consulship. Galates shared the consulship with Victor, the Eastern *magister equitum*.⁴⁶ Over the early part of the year Valens made no move from Marcianople, but in the summer of 369 he received envoys from two Armenian nobles, named Cyclaces and Artabanes, asking that Pap be returned to Armenia.⁴⁷ In response, Valens ordered the *comes* (count) Terentius, along with Addeus, later *comes domesticorum* (Count of the Household), to escort the Armenian prince back to Armenia.⁴⁸ However, Terentius was instructed that once there he was on no account to make any attempt to 'restore' Pap to the Armenian throne.⁴⁹ Valens still had unfinished business with the Goths. He needed a victory in order to justify signing a peace treaty with the Tervingi, as otherwise leaving the Danubian frontier could send the message across the frontier that he was incapable of defeating an enemy, so encouraging further attacks from both the Tervingi and other barbarians. Further, he did not want to start a war on a second front with Persia. A victory over Athanaric was essential.



Map 17. The East 369.

In early July Valens moved the court to Noviodunum (now Isaccea, Romania) and built a pontoon bridge before crossing the Danube into Gothic territory and moving north.⁵⁰ A series of minor engagements ensued before, at an unknown site, he confronted and finally defeated Athanaric in an unnamed battle. Sadly, all details of the battle have been lost. However, it has been suggested that Athanaric's ability to withdraw his troops from the battle successfully, and so avoid annihilation, implies that he was a military commander of no mean ability, a hypothesis supported by the fact that later, when the Huns became a menace, despite internal divisions, Athanaric was again appointed to command the Goths in the face of the new threat.⁵¹

Contrary to the expectations of modern authorities, Valens did not launch a

pursuit of Athanaric, allowing the Gothic survivors of the battle to escape and reform. This is understandable. Valens knew that he was needed on the Persian frontier: what he did not need was a major defeat against the Goths when he was so close to success; caution was the order of the day. Valens returned to Marcianople to pass the winter with the troops.⁵²

Valens knew the Goths were now at breaking point. Defeated in battle, and ‘reeling under the weight of starvation and economic collapse after three years of conflict’, the Goths sent a series of embassies to Valens suing for peace.⁵³ The first of these embassies appear to have been rebuffed: although Valens needed to end the war, he had to be seen as the victor, and it is likely that the terms originally proposed by the Goths were simply unacceptable. However, in the end Valens agreed to send an embassy to the Goths in order to negotiate a truce. Negotiations were to continue over the winter of 369–370.⁵⁴

Yet Valens could not wait for the treaty to be signed if he was to take any action on the eastern frontier in the following year. Once the ambassadors had been dispatched he ordered the logistical preparations for a new campaign in the east, including the supplies necessary to transfer troops to the new theatre of operations. Simultaneously, he ordered Eutropius, the *magister memoriae* (‘master of communications and propaganda’⁵⁵), to begin the task of readying the population of the East for a war with Persia.⁵⁶ Accordingly, Eutropius published a *breviaria* (‘brief history of Rome’) focusing upon the seemingly continuous wars with Persia. When Eutropius was replaced by Festus in early 370, Festus continued the propaganda assault with the publication of his own *breviaria* on approximately the same theme.⁵⁷ However, whether this was fully necessary is open to doubt: the Empire had been disgusted by the treaty of 363 and so attempts to overturn the treaty would without question be welcome in the East.

Persia

By this time affairs in the east had reached a ‘critical state’.⁵⁸ Pap had returned to Armenia and had begun to ‘rule’ the country, although without the insignia of kingship.⁵⁹ Learning that the ‘traitorous’ Armenians had once again changed sides, in the autumn of 369 Shapur personally led an invasion of Armenia.⁶⁰ Pap and his followers took refuge in the mountains bordering Lazica, where they hid for five months.⁶¹ Galled at the resistance and his inability to capture Pap, Shapur destroyed the Armenian capital of Artaxata, as well as any castles and strongholds he had already captured, and personally led the assault on the city of Artogerassa. Over the winter of 369–370 the city was finally captured and sacked. Paranjem, Arshak’s wife and the mother of Pap, was captured and then allegedly raped until she was dead.⁶² Leaving a number of *ostikans* (overseers) in charge of Armenia, and allegedly ordering a persecution of Armenian Christians and their forced conversion to Mazdaism, Shapur returned to Persia.⁶³

Chapter 8

370

THE WEST

For Valentinian the year 370 was dominated by three separate events. One was the beginning of what would turn out to be a series of damaging trials in Rome; the second was the Burgundian invasion of Alamannic territory; and the third was his expedition along the Danube.

The Trials¹

As previously noted, in 369 a man named Chilo had accused three men of attempting to poison him. These included a soothsayer named Campensis. After Olybrius, the City Prefect, had failed to act due to severe illness, the *praefectus annonae* (Prefect of Supplies: his main duty was to supervise the supply of grain to Rome), a Pannonian named Maximinus, took charge of the investigation. Either late in 369 or early in 370 Maximinus reported that a number of senators were involved in ‘sorcerous’ practices. Valentinian had already launched an investigation into sorcery following his illness in 364, so it was certain that a new inquiry would be launched: throughout their reign the two emperors would be on their guard against ‘sorcery’.²

Unfortunately, the precise definition of a ‘sorcerer’ from this period is unclear. However, from sources such as the *Codex Theodosianus* it is possible to formulate a reasonable characterization. There appear to have been two major concepts behind the label. One is that the ‘sorcerers’ are using ‘secret and antisocial sacrifices that might be used against the emperor[s]’.³ This can be directly linked to the concept that sorcery was aimed at foreseeing the future, for example using sacrificial animals in the Etruscan divination ritual where *haruspices*, ‘entrail observers’, attempted to deduce the will of the gods from the appearance presented by the entrails of the sacrificial animal, especially the liver and gallbladder of sheep. Although in private this could go unnoticed or unpunished, Christian emperors – and especially Valentinian and Valens – lived in fear of the results of such foretelling either being broadcast to their detriment, or used by potential rivals to help stir up rebellion.⁴ Alongside these strictly imperial concerns was the late-Roman belief that sorcerers were

Able to control the eternal order of the planets, and the voluntary operations of the human mind. They dreaded the mysterious power of spells and incantations, of potent herbs, and execrable rites;

which could extinguish or recall life, inflame the passions of the soul, blast the works of creation, and extort from the reluctant demons the secrets of futurity. They believed, with the wildest inconsistency, that this preternatural dominion of the air, of earth, and of hell, was exercised, from the vilest motives of malice or gain, by some wrinkled hags and itinerant sorcerers, who passed their obscure lives in penury and contempt. The arts of magic were equally condemned by the public opinion and by the laws of Rome; but as they tended to gratify the most imperious passions of the heart of man, they were continually proscribed, and continually practised.

Gibbon, 1861, Vol. 2, 89

With these beliefs in mind it is easier to understand Valentinian's next move. At some time in spring or early summer 370 Maximinus was promoted to *vicarius* and ordered to extend his investigations.⁵ He was also granted *maiestas immunita* (On the Immunity of Dignitaries), which allowed him to ignore the traditional legal immunity of the senators of Rome from accusation by people of inferior status and, more importantly, allowed him to put senators to the torture.⁶ This law had been clarified as recently as July 369, possibly in response to Senatorial pressure following the initial stages of the investigation – although this is uncertain – but the senate suddenly found the law suspended due to the association of the investigation with sorcery.⁷ Due to the perceived seriousness of the situation, the *notarius* (secretary) Leo – another Pannonian – was appointed to help Maximinus in his enquiries.⁸ Valentinian was determined to investigate the claims fully with the help of trusted fellow-Pannonians.

Unfortunately for the Senate, the two investigators found much to worry them. In large part this stemmed from the lifestyles of the members of the senate, who were exceedingly rich and given to luxurious lifestyles concomitant with their wealth. In part due to the resultant lack of excitement, plus the fact that many of them still adhered to traditional Roman religious practices, the 'varied diversions of aristocratic leisure' included numerous forms of 'magic' and 'adultery', both of which were directly against Imperial legislation and expectations. Unsurprisingly, 'for the superstitious and immoral senators whose activities were unearthed ... the consequences [were] serious'.⁹ This negative impression of the senate can be directly contrasted with the image of the imperial court: 'in the pursuit of its leisure [Valentinian's] court was the scene of cultural interests of a vigour, variety, and even elegance which do not always receive their due recognition'.¹⁰ It is unsurprising that Valentinian was unhappy with the senate and its moral failings.

Ammianus, and many modern historians, have chosen to interpret the series of prosecutions which followed as evidence of a political conspiracy against

Valentinian and have further painted the emperor in the worst possible colours as a man determined to conduct a 'vicious and thorough political campaign against the senate'. Although many senators, including members of senior families, were sentenced to execution or exile, senators were not the only victims, and many of their number were found not guilty.¹¹ These factors demonstrate that the purpose of the trials was to eradicate 'magic' and 'adultery', not an anti-senatorial campaign. Ammianus' sympathy towards the senate has led many modern historians astray. Yet despite Ammianus' exaggerated claims, there can be little doubt that throughout the year 370 fear and suspicion were a major part of life in Italy.

The Burgundians

As was noted in the previous chapter, probably late in 369 or (due to chronological problems) less likely early in 370, Valentinian had made an agreement with the Burgundians for a joint attack on the Alamannic leader Macrianus. No reasons are given in the ancient sources for the apparently abrupt change of policy towards Macrianus, apart from Ammianus, who claims that Valentinian was faced with the dilemma of 'how to break the arrogance of the Alamanni and their king Macrianus, who without limit or measure was confusing the Roman state by his restless disturbances'.¹² In reality, there are several possible individual causes for the decision, although it is likely that it was a combination of these, rather than any single event, that produced the change in policy.

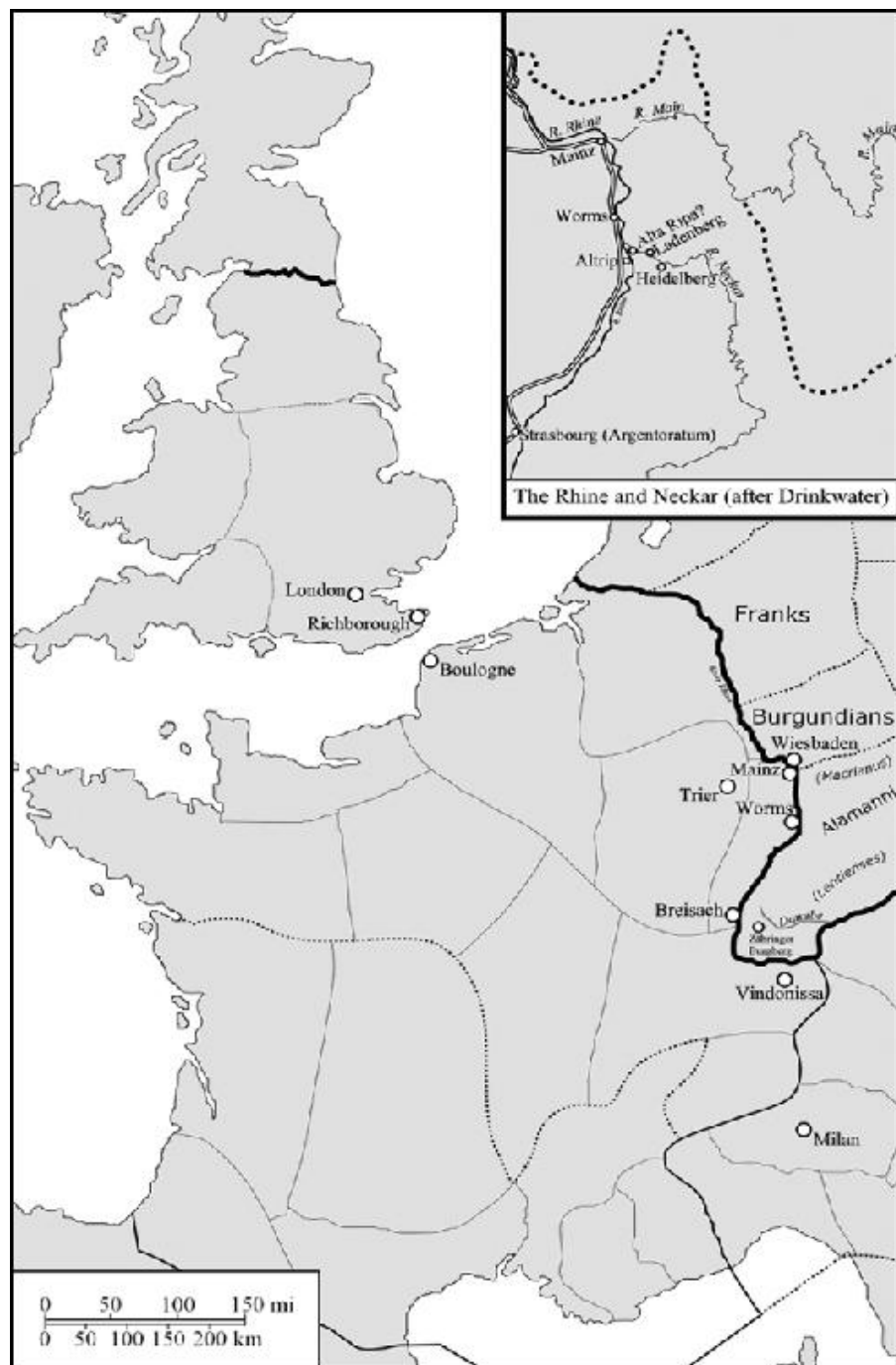
The first relates to the earlier elimination of Vithicabius, whose assassination had left a power vacuum. Although the Romans had attempted to install a replacement, anger at the Roman attack will have resulted in many Alamanni being unwilling to support the (unnamed) Roman appointee. Instead, an unknown number of tribesmen, and especially those on territory bordering that of Macrianus, may have been tempted to change their allegiance to Macrianus, as although he was a Roman ally the attack on Mainz by Rando will have given the impression that Macrianus was not simply a Roman puppet. This allowed Macrianus to further extend his power-base, so much so that Valentinian became alarmed at his growing power.

The second refers back to Rando's earlier attack on Mainz in 368. It is feasible, though impossible to prove, that although Valentinian accepted that the attack had not been ordered by Macrianus, he was now wary of further attacks from an area previously considered 'safe'.¹³ In this context, Valentinian's decision to construct a new fort at Mons Piri, deep in Macrianus' territory, makes sense: he simply wanted to monitor Alamannic activity in order to pre-empt any further attack, and Valentinian may also have intended that the new building should act as a warning to Macrianus that he was now under suspicion.¹⁴

However, contrary to Valentinian's expectations, the attempt to build a fort on his territory may have been interpreted by Macrianus not as a warning, but

as the opening stages of a Roman campaign to reduce his growing power. As a result, Macrianus may have ordered Hortarius to take action. Consequently, Hortarius' plea to the Romans to stop building may have been a last attempt at forestalling the expected war. When the Romans refused to stop, Hortarius' troops attacked and slaughtered the Roman troops building the fort.

For Valentinian, this second attack by one of Macrianus' subordinates implied either that Macrianus was weak and could not control his subordinates, or, more likely, that he was complicit in both attacks. Alongside the fact that the raid had exposed a vulnerable area in the Roman defences, these defeats needed to be avenged: hence the alliance with the Burgundians.¹⁵



Map 18. The West 370.

As presented in the sources, it would appear that the Burgundians were to attack from the ‘north’ whilst Valentinian attacked from the ‘south’. The concept of a dual attack will no doubt have appealed to Valentinian: in one

swift move he would both curb Macrianus' power and ensure that the Burgundians and Alamanni remained on hostile terms. The Roman concept of 'divide-and-conquer' was to be admirably served.

Gaul

Yet the attack did not work out as planned. The reasons are, as usual, unknown, but taking other events and the chronology into consideration may give a clue as to why the plan failed. When Valentinian had made his plans with the Burgundians, most likely in late 369, it is almost certain that he believed that the West was now free from attack and internal unrest.¹⁶ It was only after the agreement had been made that he was informed that Gaul was suffering from a 'frenzy for brigandage' and that Constantianus, *tribunus stabuli* and brother of Justina, Valentinian's wife, had been killed.¹⁷ Valentinian's priorities quickly changed: for the Romans, internal conflicts always took precedence over external threats.

Consequently, early in 370, possibly in spring, Valentinian doubtless deployed the majority of his troops throughout Gaul to quell the disruption and avenge his brother-in-law. He may even have hoped that the troops would have the time to stop the 'brigandage' and then return to the frontier to take part in the campaign against the Alamanni. A small proportion of the army remained with Valentinian on the frontier, where in the meantime he continued to focus on the building programme.¹⁸

The 'campaign' took longer than expected and the troops had not yet returned to the frontier before the Burgundians, probably in either July or August, amassed their troops and invaded Alamannic territory. Unexpectedly, they reached the Rhine without meeting their Roman allies. Understandably, they were angry that the Romans had not attacked as agreed.¹⁹

Entering into dialogue with Valentinian, the Burgundians demanded a support force to help cover their retreat through Alamannic territory back to their homes.²⁰ Valentinian was either unable or unwilling to agree, since many of his troops were probably still on service in Gaul. Furious, the Burgundians killed their prisoners and returned home without reward for their help.²¹

Although Ammianus claims that Theodosius, the *magister equitum*, had learned that the Alamanni had dispersed in fear and so invaded Alamannic territory from Raetia, other considerations suggest that Ammianus is mistaken in his chronology and that Theodosius' attack took place later, possibly in 371.²²

The Source of the Danube

The failure to co-operate with the Burgundians, especially after Symmachus had made much of the alliance, was a major political setback for Valentinian. Once the Burgundians had set off on their homeward journey and were no longer a threat to Roman territory, for propaganda purposes Valentinian needed something to divert attention away from the debacle.

Secure in the knowledge that the frontier would remain quiet due to the

movements of the Burgundians, but with the majority of his army still quelling the unrest in Gaul, Valentinian took a small force and entered territory which had once been held by the Empire. In late 370 Valentinian and his forces, possibly using Windisch as a base, set out along old Roman roads and traversed their way up the stream of the Danube, eventually locating the source of the river.²³ It was then announced to the Roman world that Valentinian, in an act of extreme bravery, had travelled beyond the frontiers and personally located the source of the River Danube.²⁴ Although to modern eyes this is not noteworthy, to Valentinian's propaganda experts this will have been a major event that could be used, much as the campaign against Alta Ripa in the previous year, to suggest that Valentinian remained willing to campaign beyond the Empire's boundaries to ensure peace.

THE EAST

Galates and Religious Persecution²⁵

It would be easy to follow the line given in the ancient sources that in 370 the Arian Valens began his persecutions of the Nicene Christians, especially with regard to Basil of Caesarea.²⁶ Although the persecution of Basil is supposed to have begun on Epiphany (6 January) in that year, the truth appears to be that Valens and Basil did not have a major ecumenical disagreement, but a long conversation after which Valens departed peacefully.²⁷ Later, either in January or February of that same winter, Valens' ministers – especially Demosthenes, who Basil had insulted – tried to convince Valens that Basil should be banished from Caesarea. At the same time, Valens' son Galates fell ill. Instead of banishment, Basil was called to Galates' side in order that he could pray for Galates' safety: obviously, Basil had sufficiently impressed the emperor in their conversation that Valens was not prepared to banish him, contrary to the request of his close associates, and instead asked him for help. Unfortunately, Basil's efforts were fruitless: despite his prayers, Galates died.²⁸ His death was doubtless a bitter blow for Valens, who had lost his only son and heir.

At the same time, Basil used his access to the imperial court to connect with some of Valens' generals. He established friendships with Modestus, Saturninus, Terentius, Traianus and Victor, all generals who were committed Nicenes and in the near future would act as a counterbalance to the Arian advice of Eudoxius of Constantinople and Euzoius of Antioch: surprisingly, Demosthenes, who had attempted to have Basil expelled, was one of those who Basil managed to convert into a supporter.²⁹

The Gothic Treaty

Sadly, Valens could not spend a lot of time in mourning for his son as many issues still needed to be resolved. The main responsibility was the ending of the Gothic War. Despite the claims in the ancient sources that the result of the Gothic War was an outright Roman victory, the treaty that followed was a

compromise between the Romans, pressured by events in the east to conclude the war, and the Goths, pressured by starvation and poverty to do the same. The fact that over the winter of 369–370 Valens sent Arintheus, the *magister peditum*, and Victor, the *magister equitum*, to negotiate the terms indicates just how much Valens needed to conclude the war and transfer the army to the eastern frontier.³⁰ This is supported by the fact that Valens also agreed to one of the terms demanded by Athanaric: namely, that they should meet on a boat in the middle of the Danube because Athanaric had sworn an oath to his father never to set foot on Roman soil.³¹ It is not known whether Athanaric actually had taken an oath or not. There has been speculation aimed at proving the oath to be fact, or claiming that it was a political manoeuvre aimed at proving to his followers that he had not submitted to Valens, or that Athanaric was not allowed on to Roman soil because of the terms of his office as *iudex*, or even suggesting that the oath was not to *invade* the Empire.³² Unfortunately the paucity of the sources makes it impossible to make any clear decision on the issue.

For their part, the Goths needed peace in order to resume trading with the empire, especially in the foodstuffs of which they had few supplies remaining. However, Athanaric could not be seen to be ‘unconditionally surrendering’ to the Romans: his position as leader of the Goths rested to a large degree on his martial ability. Although defeated, he had not surrendered. Whether he had sworn an oath to his father or not was immaterial: he needed concessions from the Romans in order to save face before his followers. By demanding that the two parties should meet on a boat in the middle of the Danube, Athanaric was demonstrating to his followers that although he had lost the battle, he had not lost the war.

In February or March 370 Valens, accompanied by his bodyguard, and Athanaric, guarded by his *comitatus*, were rowed in boats to the middle of the Danube.³³ Here, they agreed a treaty and exchanged hostages. Although sometimes called the ‘Treaty of Noviodunum’, recent work has demonstrated that the treaty is unlikely to have been signed at this place. There is no information given in the sources as to where the meeting took place, but it is more likely to have been either at Marcianopolis or Dorostorus, some 90 kilometres from Marcianopolis.³⁴

Only two clauses in the treaty are clearly delineated. One is that trade would resume between the Goths and Romans, but only at two designated trading places. The other was that the Romans would no longer pay ‘gifts’ to the Goths.³⁵ It has been claimed that these aspects of the treaty demonstrate that it ‘may have been part of a larger Valentinianic policy of separating barbarians and Romans’.³⁶ The theory is tempting, but adheres to the concept that Valens slavishly followed Valentinian’s lead in all matters, which is unproven.³⁷ Instead, the treaty was a clear demonstration that Valens had maintained the upper hand in the conflict and peace was being concluded in Rome’s favour.³⁸

Although Themistius had prepared the Romans for ‘peace-without-victory’ in his earlier oration, the fact that Valens had concluded a treaty where the Romans were no longer paying tribute was a close second to ‘unconditional surrender’, and this could be utilized in the propaganda surrounding the treaty: all three emperors – Valentinian, Valens and Gratian – took the title *Gothicus Maximus* to celebrate the ‘victory’.³⁹ The Gothic War was over, and peace was to reign in the region until 376. Athanaric returned to his ruined country, whilst Valens returned to Marcianopolis.⁴⁰

For his part, it can be inferred from his next actions that Athanaric lay at least some of the blame for the war on Gothic Christians whose lives were ‘mediated by the Romans’.⁴¹ Accordingly, he now instigated a major persecution in an attempt to re-convert them to the ‘old’ religion of their forefathers, and in order to remove ‘possible partisans of Rome’.⁴² He ordered a ‘tribal religious image’ to be carried through the countryside and declared that those not worshipping at the image were to be burnt, along with their dwellings.⁴³ His aim appears to have been the ‘complete extermination’ of Gothic Christians.⁴⁴ The move would be detrimental to the Goths as a people.

Unlike Athanaric, Valens had external problems. Probably even before his arrival in Marcianopolis, and aware that Shapur was waging war on Armenia, Valens quickly sent the *magister peditum* Arintheus ahead to the Persian frontier to gather news and, hopefully, to put pressure on the Persians to stop them making further attacks against Rome’s allies.⁴⁵ Valens’ later actions suggest that with events in Europe settled, he was now intent upon overturning the Treaty of 363 and imposing a new Treaty which would be much more beneficial to Rome.⁴⁶ In fact, in early 370 his ministers began distributing propaganda to the effect that the treaty of 363 was shameful and that war was necessary to overturn its derogatory terms.⁴⁷

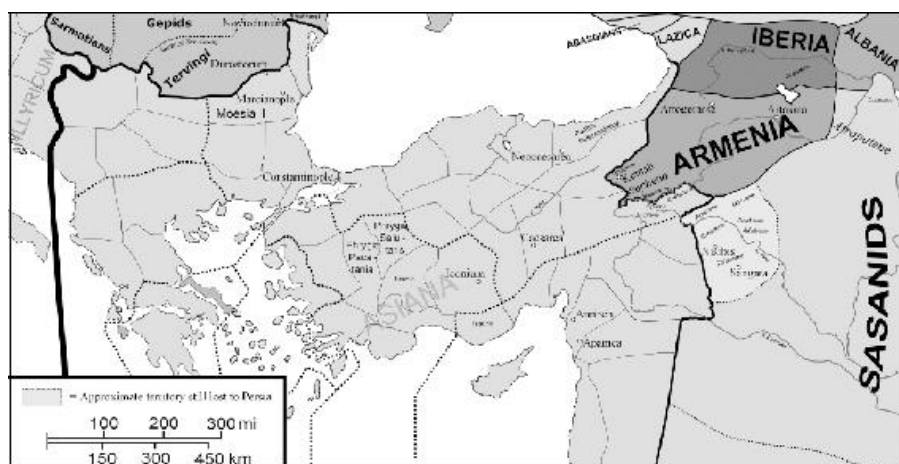
Armenia and Iberia

The arrival of Arintheus was only just in time. Over the winter Shapur had attempted to persuade Pap to change allegiance. Wavering, Pap had executed Cyclaces and Artabanes, the Armenian nobles who had sent envoys to Valens asking that Pap be restored to the throne in 369, and sent their heads to Shapur as a sign of his loyalty.⁴⁸ At this point Arintheus arrived in Armenia and Pap immediately reverted to his earlier loyalty to Rome. Fortunately for Pap, the presence of Arintheus and a large number of Roman troops on Armenian soil prevented Shapur from launching another Persian attack. Instead, Shapur was reduced to sending an embassy to Valens, complaining about Arintheus’ presence in Armenia as it was contrary to the Treaty of 363.⁴⁹

Valens had already decided to take aggressive action in the east, as witnessed by the fact that for the next eight years he would spend the majority of his time wintering in Antioch and spending the summer on the eastern frontiers coordinating military operations.⁵⁰ Furthermore, at around this time Valens issued new, extraordinary tax laws aimed at vastly increasing the pay

for army recruits in the hope of encouraging recruitment prior to the renewal of war against Persia.⁵¹ Aiming to take charge in person, Valens left Constantinople in spring and arrived at Antioch by at the latest late April.⁵²

The Persian envoys almost certainly met Valens after he had left Constantinople, and the arrival of a Persian embassy, rather than news of an all-out attack, convinced Valens that he was correct in assuming that hard-line tactics were the best way to deal with Shapur. Accordingly, he now sent the *comes* Terentius with twelve legions to restore Sauromaces to his position as king of Iberia.⁵³ Before the army had reached the River Cyrus messengers arrived from Aspacures, Sauromacus' cousin and the Persian appointee as king, begging that they should rule the country jointly, as he could not ally with Rome since his son was being held hostage by Shapur.⁵⁴ The two sides quickly reached agreement, partitioning Iberia with the boundary at the River Cyrus.⁵⁵



Map 19. The East 370.

Although the dating is insecure, it is probably at this time that Valens sent a force to eliminate the Maratocrupeni. Now that he had amassed forces in the east, Valens had the chance to put down the 'rebellion' before Shapur made preparations for attack the following year.⁵⁶ According to Libanius this was carried out with extreme savagery: 'mothers with babes in arms thrust into the flames'.⁵⁷

Although the Iberian agreement was soon ratified by Valens, Shapur used the division of Iberia as grounds for war. In winter 370 he declared the Treaty of 363 to be void and began amassing an army ready to invade Armenia in 371, calling on all of his allies to supply troops – according to P'awstos including Urnayr the king of 'Aghuania'/'Aluank' (Caucasian Albania).⁵⁸ Interestingly, Urnayr is attested as being a Christian, but defied expectations and was loyal to Shapur.

Once he became aware of these developments, Valens in turn sent Traianus, *comes rei militaris* ('Count of the Military'), and Vadomarius, the ex-king of the Alamanni and father of Vithicabius, to Armenia with orders to defend but not to attack in their turn.⁵⁹ Although it was still necessary for Valens to issue laws concerning the drafting of recruits, especially as in this case he was expecting to fight a major campaign against Persia, later events demonstrate that by this date the Roman army of the East was at virtually full strength.⁶⁰ Events would now turn upon the outcome of the war in Armenia in 371.

Famine

Unfortunately, Valens would not be able to spend his first winter after the Gothic War in the east facing Persia. Surviving references are sparse and fragmentary, yet it is almost certain that there was a major crop failure for the harvests of Asia Minor in late 370.⁶¹ Centred upon Phrygia, the ensuing famine devastated large parts of Asia Minor. To make matters worse, the famine appears to have caused problems for livestock in the area, with the ensuing lack of foodstuffs resulting in an unknown epidemic devastating the herds in the region.⁶² With both grain and meat in short supply, conditions in Asia Minor quickly deteriorated, with many people travelling to Constantinople in the hope of finding food in the city.

Once he was made aware of the seriousness of the situation, Valens returned to Constantinople, determined to ensure that the effects of the famine were reduced to a minimum. Arriving at the latest by December 370, Valens immediately ordered work to begin on the Horrea Valentiaca, a large warehouse facility to store grain for the city.⁶³ Furthermore, he appears to have ordered work on the port facilities, probably to ensure the swift arrival, storage and distribution of grain throughout the city.⁶⁴

The famine lasted well into the new year, as witnessed by Valens passing laws concerning ship owners in February 371: it would appear that Valens was attempting to ensure that supplies of grain were still to be supplied to the capital and that there would be no repetition of the famine.⁶⁵ Once the immediate crisis had passed, however, Valens returned to the eastern frontier for the upcoming conflict with Persia.

Chapter 9

371

The Trials Continue

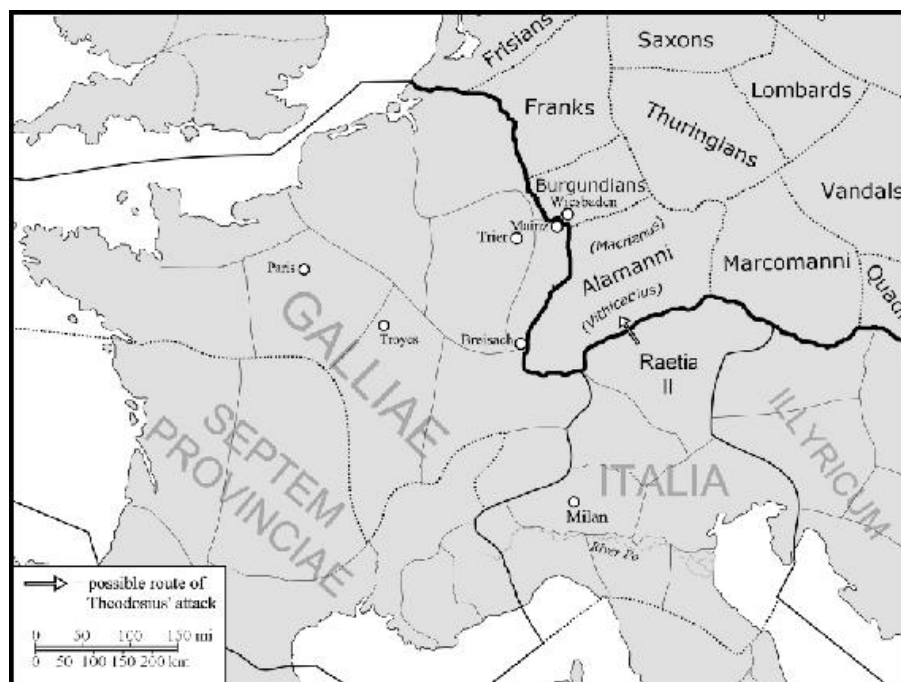
Whilst Valentinian was occupied with campaigns on the frontier, in Rome Maximinus' investigations continued. In desperation, in 371 the senate sent an embassy to the Imperial court, intent upon protesting against its members' treatment and determined to have their immunity from torture restored. Gaining a meeting with Valentinian, the embassy made their request that the decree removing their immunity be repealed. Initially Valentinian denied ever having made such a decree, but after being quietly reminded of the truth by the *quaestor* Eupraxius Valentinian relented and rescinded the order.¹

It is possibly at this time that Maximinus was recalled to the court and rewarded with the post of Praetorian Prefect of Gaul: he was in his new position by at the latest 7 August 371.² The trials continued in a 'less-aggressive' tone under Maximinus' successors, peaking in 373, but for the most part, without the threat of torture, the senate and other well-placed individuals were now able to defend themselves from the charges.³

Macrianus

Although the chronology is extremely confused at this point, recent research has suggested that Valentinian maintained the pressure on Macrianus in the new year.⁴ He was determined to capture Macrianus alive.⁵ With this in mind, and acting upon the advice of Alamannic deserters, in 371 Valentinian ordered Severus to cross the Rhine and advance to Wiesbaden.⁶ However, once he was in Alamannic territory, and because he had only a few troops with him, Severus decided to await reinforcements under Valentinian. Upon their arrival, Valentinian moved towards his target. The night attack on Macrianus' residence was foiled by the Roman troops. Despite Valentinian's orders that they refrain from making noise or attacking local villages, the troops did as they pleased. The noise and the fires awoke Macrianus' retainers, and he was placed in a 'swift wagon' and taken to safety. Frustrated, Valentinian ordered all Alamannic territory within fifty miles burned, then returned with the troops to Trier.⁷

Foiled in his attempt to capture Macrianus, but with the Alamannic leader on the run, either late in 371 or early in 372 – as usual the chronology is unclear – Valentinian decided to replace Macrianus with a man of his own choosing. An individual named Fraomarius was installed as the 'king' of the



Map 20. The West 371.

Theodosius

Although the exact circumstances are confused, it is probably in 371 that Valentinian ordered the *magister equitum* Theodosius, who was at that time in Raetia, to invade Alamannic territory. Ammianus claims that the attack happened in 370 and was on Theodosius' own initiative, taking advantage of the Burgundian attack and attempting to weaken Macrianus.⁹ This is unlikely. The territory abutting Raetia was almost certainly nominally under the control of the new, unnamed king imposed by Valentinian and it was a long way from the areas 'ruled' by Macrianus. Attacking this territory as part of the campaign against Macrianus would be a little unusual. The reported version of events probably repeats imperial propaganda.

An alternative, and more plausible, scenario is that the new, unnamed Alamannic king imposed on the Alamanni by Valentinian to replace Vithicabius was facing internal unrest. Valentinian needed to support his nominee, and accordingly ordered Theodosius to attack territories refusing to accept the king's authority.¹⁰

Valentinian had previously reported that Vithicabius had been removed, that a new king had been put in place by the might of Roman arms, and that consequently there was no longer a threat from this frontier. In direct contrast, the fact that the new king was having trouble controlling his territory implied

that the Alamanni neither feared nor respected Valentinian. Therefore to broadcast the information that the 'defeated' Alamanni were rebelling was to invite scorn and disaster: should Valentinian appear weak, there was the danger of both internal rebellion and external attack. Obviously, Valentinian could not allow this information to spread. He looked for an alternative and settled upon the concept of linking the attack with the Burgundian invasion and so maintaining the image of extreme pressure being put on Macrianus, hence the confusion in the sources.

Whatever the date or the cause of the attack, Theodosius' invasion appears to have caught the Alamanni by surprise: he killed many and captured more, with the captives being sent to Italy and settled on the banks of the River Po as imperial subjects.¹¹

Although the year had been fraught with difficulties, for Valentinian it ended with success: Fraomarius had replaced Macrianus and Theodosius had conducted a successful campaign against the Alamanni in order to support Valentinian's other Alamannic nominee. In theory, the Alamanni were now under the control of Rome. Furthermore, the Burgundians and the Alamanni were more hostile to each other than ever and were extremely unlikely to form an alliance. The northern border appeared secure.

THE EAST

The sources for events in the east at this time are confused and open to widely differing interpretations.¹² One of the major difficulties is that Ammianus does not cover events outside the empire and so we are forced to rely on Armenian sources, P'awstos Buzandac'i and Moses Khorenats'i. Neither of these gives a clear indication of the chronology of their narratives, and in many respects they appear to contradict each other.¹³ However, close analysis reveals that at least two further battles were fought, with the first being an offensive strike by the Persians.

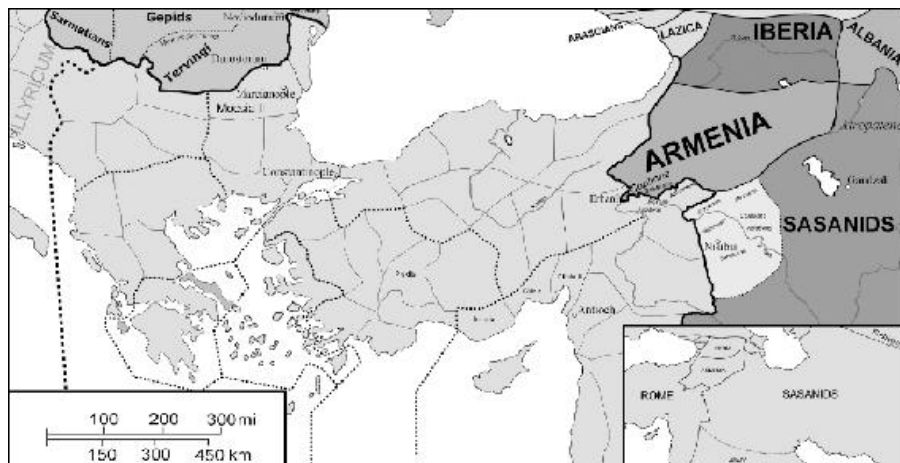
The Battle of Bagavan¹⁴

After the earlier defeat Shapur regrouped his forces and in the spring of 371 he invaded Armenia.¹⁵ Learning of the attack, Pap ordered that a muster be held at Bagavan. The Byzantine troops that were at Erhand and Baxish were assembled at the same place and began digging a trench around a camp near mount Npat, close to the River Euphrates.¹⁶

A disagreement about whether Pap was to take personal charge of the Armenian troops followed, but it was decided that the *sparapet* (general) Mushegh would command the army of 90,000 men and that Pap, along with Nerses, 'archbishop' of Armenia, would take refuge on Mount Npat and watch the battle from a safe position.¹⁷ The Romans remained under their own command.

On the Persian side, Urnayr, King of Albania, suggested that the Albanians should oppose the Armenians, leaving the Persians to face the Roman troops. According to P'awstos, this was the deployment for the battle. Although

P'awstos is sometimes seen as being less than accurate, on this occasion he may be near to the truth: other battles which are described that pitted the Persians and their allies against the Romans and their allies appear to have followed the same pattern, with the Persians facing the Romans and the Allies facing each other.¹⁸



Map 21. The East 371.

As the battle began, Mushegh and the Armenians took station on the right flank and moved ahead of the Romans. According to P'awstos the Armenians simply advanced on the enemy and put them to flight, following the victory with a merciless pursuit which caused heavy casualties.¹⁹

According to Moses, the two lines faced each other, with Armenians and Persians skirmishing in the centre, the Armenians being victorious. At this point the Persian main lines advanced and the Armenian skirmishers were forced to take shelter behind the Byzantine infantry lines. The Persians now came to blows with the Romans' main line, at which point the Romans and Armenians launched a counter-attack, with the Armenians breaking the Persian line and so causing the rout that ensued.²⁰ According to P'awstos, during the pursuit Mushegh caught up with Urnayr, the Albanian king, and after striking him many times on the head with the shaft of his spear allowed him to escape, claiming that it was not the task of a general to kill kings.²¹

Analysis

There is some confusion over the Battle of Bagavan, as it is known in the Western sources. P'awstos and Moses appear to describe a single encounter, called by P'awstos the Battle of Bagavan but by Moses the Battle of Dzirav (Jirov): P'awstos also claims that this was the second battle fought at this location. Unfortunately, P'awstos doesn't appear to describe the first. As a result, it is unclear whether they are describing the same battle, or whether there were two battles, and if so which of these two P'awstos and Moses are

describing.²²

Despite some inconsistencies, the two sources appear to be describing victories for the Armenian-East Roman alliance against the Sasanids which both took place near Mount Npat. Although insecure and open to doubt, it may be simpler to assume that the various sources are describing the same single battle, rather than that there were two distinct battles at an identical location.²³

Although there are discrepancies and doubts concerning the two accounts, that of Moses may be depicting at least some of the events. He describes the skirmishes between the Armenians and the Persians, and notes the defensive nature of the Roman battle-line. This corresponds to the information given in Ammianus that Traianus (not Terentius, as given by P'awstos, although on this occasion the mistake is understandable²⁴) and Vadomarius had been given strict instructions to remain on the defensive if this was at all possible.²⁵

The Battle of Gandzak (Ganjak, Atropatene)

Although the Battle of Bagavan had been lost, Shapur was determined not to give in. There followed a series of raids and minor invasions, before a further major assault led by Shapur ended with a second battle at Gandzak.²⁶ The information is given by P'awstos, and the fact that a treaty was signed later in 371 (see below) clearly demonstrates that any battle was fought after the Battle of Bagavan but during the same campaign year.

According to P'awstos, Urnayr the king of Albania:

Sent some information to Mushegh via messenger: 'I have great thanks for you for not putting me to death. God put me in your hands, and you spared me. For the rest of my life I will not forget your affection. However, I am informing you that the king of Iran, Shapuh, with all of his troops is coming to fall upon you unawares.' Then the *stratelate* [Traianus] of the Byzantines organized the troops which were with him, and headed toward the borders of Armenia, from the side of Ganjak in Atrpayakan *tun*. Similarly the *sparapet* Mushegh assembled all the Armenian troops. There were 90,000 well-armed, select men, spear in hand, to say nothing about the shield-bearers.

Pavstos 5.5

If P'awsto's numbers are correct, it would appear that for this conflict the entire army of Armenia was gathered to fight Shapur, leaving all other borders undefended – a risk that Arshak and Mushegh were willing to take in face of the Persian threat. There followed another battle, described in some detail by Pavstos:

The brigades of spearmen attacked especially ferociously, bravely hurling to the ground champions, seated upon their horses, and this in the presence of king Shapuh of Iran ... The multitude of the

troops of the legions, that is of the Byzantine shield-bearers, as well as the Armenian shield-bearers were protecting the side of the Armenian troops. They themselves were surrounded with shields, resembling a secure city. When the Iranian troops were able to disperse the Byzantine troops or the brigade of Armenian spearmen somewhat, [the dispersed soldiers] would enter the legion of shield-bearing Byzantines or the shield-bearing Armenians as though entering a fortress, and rest there. As soon as they had rested a little, they would emerge thence and attack, felling and beheading countless Iranians before them, and always making the same encouraging remarks as they killed, regarding their king Arshak. Again, when the Iranian troops appeared to be getting the upper hand, [the Armenians and Byzantine troops] would go to the legions of shield-bearing troops, as to a secure fortress, the shields would part, let them in, and then close again. On that day, the Iranian troops were defeated by the Byzantine troops and Terent [Traianus] their *stratelate*, and by the Armenian brigades and their *sparapet* Mushegh. King Shapuh of Iran fled from that battle, with a few [retainers].

Pavstos 5.5

There are a few problems with this account, largely based upon the terminology being used.²⁷ However, it would appear that the Armeno-Roman allies deployed with their infantry in a defensive position in the centre and the cavalry on the wings. The numbers and composition of the Persian army is unknown, but it would appear that the majority – if not all – of the Persian forces were cavalry. When the Persians attacked their cavalry were repulsed in the centre but a prolonged engagement took place on the flanks. Whenever the allied cavalry were either threatened with defeat or became too tired to fight effectively they retreated to the shelter of the infantry and regrouped before renewing the fight. Eventually the morale of the Persian army collapsed and they fled from the field. Pavstos' claim that 'King Shapuh of Iran fled from that battle, with a few [retainers]' suggests that the successful allies pursued the Persians as they fled the field.

Analysis

Although the battle is rarely commented upon in Western sources, the claim by P'awstos that both the Armenian and the 'Byzantine' cavalry was able to repeatedly withdraw from combat to the safety of the infantry implies a formidable level of training, including the ability to respond quickly and accurately to the order to retreat and reform. Such levels of skill are rarely ascribed to Armenian armies by Roman sources and this omission may have resulted in modern Western historians to some extent marginalizing the combat efficiency of the Armenian army.

Ceasefire

After the battle Shapur sent envoys requesting a ceasefire. At the end of summer 371 (according to Malalas after 10 November)²⁸ a truce was agreed that was to last for seven years and Valens moved to Antioch, with Shapur returning to Ctesiphon.²⁹ Unknown to both rulers, the treaty would effectively sanction Valens' alliance with Armenia for almost all of the remainder of his reign.³⁰ Although nominally at peace, both sides remained at odds with each other, and it seemed certain that war would soon break out again.³¹

Despite the threat of renewed conflict, Valens was aware of the pressure his emergency taxes were placing on the empire and shortly after the cessation of hostilities he remitted the taxes he had imposed in 370 in the hope of encouraging enlistment in the army. The remission of taxes amounted to as much as three-quarters of the tax demanded, yet it should be noted that Valens still kept one-quarter of the tax; the empire was still not in a healthy situation with regards to its finances.³²

The ceasefire of 371 was a major landmark in Valens' reign. Malalas claims that Shapur had ceded 'half of Nisibis'.³³ As has been recently noted, this statement cannot be taken as meaning that half of the city of Nisibis had been handed to the Romans by Shapur: instead, it is better to interpret the phrase as Malalas noting that the terms of the ceasefire had negated half of the *Treaty* of Nisibis, presumably Malalas' name for the treaty signed in 363.³⁴ Although most of the cities ceded by Jovian remained in Persian hands, Valens had succeeded in overturning many of the provisions won by Persia in the treaty.

The reason for Shapur's change of heart is not given in Western sources, a factor which may have reinforced the decision of many modern Western historians to abide by the negative attitude of Ammianus towards Valens. Thankfully, P'awstos fills the void: whilst Shapur had been concentrating on Armenia, the Kushans, on the northeastern frontier of the Sasanid Empire, had broken the peace and launched a major invasion of Sasanid territory.³⁵ Shapur was forced to accept the Armenian alliance with Rome in order to free his army for a campaign in the east. He was allegedly still fighting the Kushans at least as late as 374.³⁶

With Shapur concentrating on events in the east, Valens was able to continue the process of reorganizing the Prefecture of the East undisturbed by war. As part of his 'reorganization' it is sometimes claimed that it was in 371 that Valens began his persecution of the Orthodox Nicene Christians.³⁷ However, as already noted, more recent analyses of these alleged 'persecutions' demonstrate that at this point Valens was adhering to the policy of toleration agreed between himself and Valentinian: the only evidence comes from later Christian writers such as Sozomen and Socrates, whose bias in these matters has led them to exaggerate Valens' actions, changing them from attempts to halt religious unrest into 'persecutions' sweeping the East.³⁸ Although tempting, these descriptions are inaccurate and have damaged

Valens' reputation through the centuries.

With Shapur engaged in the east and Valens focusing upon internal reform, Pap and his supporters were given a free hand in Armenia. Beginning in late 371 they began the process of retaking control of the whole of the country.

Chapter 10

372

The Return of Macrianus

Valentinian's belief in his defeat of the Alamanni would not have been long lived. At the latest by summer of 372 the feelings of the Alamanni will have become clear: Fraomarius, a leader imposed by Valentinian against the wishes of the Alamanni, was not welcome. A groundswell of support for Macrianus forced Fraomarius to retreat from his 'kingdom'.² Furthermore, support for Macrianus was not limited to his followers across the Rhine: 'The speedy fall of Fraomarius reflects continuing support for Macrianus, even among high-ranking Alamanni in Roman service.'³ Macrianus returned either late in 372 or early in 373: unfortunately, Ammianus gives no indication of the dates except to state that Fraomarius was removed 'soon after' and sent to Britain with a unit of Alamannic troops and the rank of tribune, since Britain was again under attack from external enemies, although unfortunately no information concerning these attacks survive.⁴ There is no evidence that Fraomarius ever returned to his homeland.⁵

Although previous authorities have suggested that the Roman army unit called the *Bucinobantes*, named after the tribe 'ruled' by Macrianus and found in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, was raised between 365 and 368, the date of 372 remains a possibility.⁶ The earlier date relies largely on the need to have Macrianus as a friendly ruler in order to allow the recruitment of his 'tribesmen', as well as on the implied chronology in the *Notitia*. However the date of 372 is a viable alternative. The swift removal of Fraomarius suggests that anti-Roman/pro-Macrianus feeling was at its height. In the circumstances, any individuals seen as helping Fraomarius would be subject to severe repercussions with the return of Macrianus. As a result, it is possible that the *Bucinobantes* was formed by Fraomarius from amongst his supporters and others who did not wish to face the consequences of their actions when Macrianus returned. Instead, Fraomarius led his followers to Britain.

Alongside this move, the Alamannic 'chiefs' Bitheridus and Hortarius – the leader of the tribe involved at Alta Ripa in 369 – were appointed to commands in the army, and possibly sent to Britain alongside Fraomarius.⁷ Although Bitheridus appears to have been loyal to Rome, Hortarius retained his loyalty to Macrianus. Prior to the treaty between Macrianus and Valentinian in 374, Hortarius was caught sending information to Macrianus. He was tortured and burnt to death for his treachery.⁸

Sarmatia

Although of dubious accuracy, and difficult in the extreme to date, it is possible that in 372 there were growing tensions on the Danube which necessitated a campaign against the Sarmatians. Theodosius was deployed to Illyricum in order to lead the campaign and appears to have secured a victory in battle.⁹ The cause of these tensions is unknown, but given later events it is likely that Valentinian's building programme had, as in the territory of the Alamanni, required the building of forts across the Danube in territory under the control of the Sarmatians.¹⁰ Alarmed at these events, the Sarmatians may have reacted, requiring a campaign under Theodosius to relieve the pressure on the frontier. The campaign appears to have been a success, for no further problems are reported on the frontier until late in 373.



Map 22. The Sarmatian Campaign 372.

With events in *Alamannia* turning sour, with pressure growing on the Danube and with Britain again needing reinforcements, late in 372 Valentinian received yet another piece of bad news, this time concerning Africa. Other problems would have to wait.

The Rebellion of Firmus

Events in Africa in the 370s are poorly dated and recorded, with information supplied by Ammianus being supported by only a few other sources, for

example the (later) letters of Augustine. As a result, many different chronologies are possible: what is offered here is only one example, although it is thought that it offers the best solution to the many dilemmas created by the sources.

Probably at some point in 371, or at the latest in early 372, Nubel, a 'prince' of the Moors, died.¹¹ He left behind several children, including some that were the offspring of 'concubines'.¹² Amongst the legitimate sons were Gildo, Mazuca, Mascezel, Dius and Firmus.¹³ The only illegitimate son mentioned was named Sammac, sometimes called Zammac or Salmaces.¹⁴ Nubel also left a daughter, named Cyria.¹⁵

When Nubel died there appears to have been a dispute over who was to succeed. Although the problem for Valentinian is sometimes portrayed as a deep divide in the attitude to Rome of Nubel's sons, this is not the case. Firmus initially had no strong anti-Roman feelings: in fact, he had followed his father into the Roman system and served in the Roman army, elements of which became loyal to Firmus as evidenced later by the actions of two units, the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis* and the *Constantianorum pedites*.¹⁶ Furthermore, both he and his brother Dius and sister Cyria had Roman names, although his other brothers all had traditional Moorish names.

Although bearing a Moorish name, Firmus' illegitimate brother Sammac had a personal friendship with Romanus, *comes Africae*. Certainty is impossible, but it may be that the illegitimate Sammac was the eldest of Nubel's sons, hence the dispute over the succession. As a friend of Romanus, the most powerful Roman in Africa, it is possible that he would be supported by Romanus if he was to attempt to seize his father's throne.

As the eldest legitimate son, it may have been the fear of such a usurpation that caused Firmus to order Sammac's assassination: Ammianus gives no reason for the decision.¹⁷ Whatever the cause, after the murder of Sammac, Gildo immediately split from his brother Firmus and supported Romanus. On the other hand, Mascezel and Dius remained loyal to Firmus and supported him militarily, whilst Cyria supported Firmus financially.¹⁸

Once he had become king, one of Firmus' first actions was to send complaints to Valentinian about the level of taxes being levied in Africa.¹⁹ When these arrived at the Imperial court Remigius, the *magister officiorum* (Master of the Offices), who was related by marriage to and was a friend of Romanus, suppressed these envoys and instead laid accusations against Firmus.²⁰ Remigius and Romanus were using the same methods that had ensured their survival during the uprisings of the Austerians, which had occurred in the 360s.²¹

Romanus, greatly angered both by the accusations and by Sammac's assassination, 'hastening with extreme zeal ... resorted to many formidable means for the destruction of the assassin'.²² Yet these were not the only causes of dissent between Romanus and Firmus: according to Augustine, Romanus was a persecutor of the Donatists, whereas Firmus was not. Although Firmus

did receive support from Donatist leaders it is unclear whether he himself was a Donatist.²³ Shortly after the beginning of the rebellion, in early 373 Valentinian passed a law attacking Donatists in Africa, so it may simply be that the Donatists were willing to support anybody who was an opponent of Valentinian and Romanus, known persecutors.

In the earlier cases in 364 and 365 where Romanus had been accused of treason, not only had he escaped, but his accusers had been found guilty of 'conspiracy' and had been executed – even Ruricius, *praeses* (governor) of Africa Tripolitania.²⁴ In addition, Firmus feared that he would be condemned and executed for his assassination of Sammac, a friend of Romanus.²⁵ Convinced that his life was at risk, Firmus decided to raise the stakes: at some time late in 372 Firmus rebelled against Roman rule.²⁶

Firmus was supported in his rebellion by two Roman units in the province, the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis* and the *pedites Constantiani*.²⁷ Unfortunately, at this point difficulties arise in Ammianus' account. According to Ammianus, when Firmus had declared to the troops in the area that he no longer served Rome, a tribune of the *pedites Constantiani* had placed his neck-chain on Firmus' head in place of a diadem, the traditional symbol of a claim to imperial power.²⁸

There is one small piece of evidence to support the claim – an inscription found at Calama,²⁹ which has resulted in some historians accepting the claim at face value.³⁰ The question then arises as to whether Firmus had rebelled with the hope of replacing Valentinian or whether there is some other explanation for events.

Given the state of affairs in Africa, the concept that Firmus declared himself emperor is a little odd. It is certain that Firmus knew he could not replace Valentinian as Western emperor, and although it is possible that he was hoping to be accepted as co-emperor, this also was extremely unlikely. Instead, it is probable that Firmus had rebelled solely in the hope of saving his own life and not following in the footsteps of his deceased predecessors who had accused Romanus of greed. If this is true, the tribune of the *pedites Constantiani* had raised the stakes in drastic fashion without Firmus' prior consent. After the 'proclamation', denials of responsibility were to fall on deaf imperial ears.

It is likely that news of the rebellion reached Valentinian late in 372 or very early in 373. As usual with Roman affairs, internal rebellion always took precedence over external problems: Macrianus and his Alamanni were to be put aside whilst Valentinian dealt with Firmus. However, the response would take place in the new year.

In the meantime, Valentinian passed a law which elevated high-ranking court and military officials above those individuals following the 'Senatorial Cursus'.³¹ It was clear that Valentinian was determined to make everyone in the West aware that he valued the active members of the court more highly than the aristocrats in Rome, who were so absorbed in their own lives that

they failed in their duty to serve the empire.

THE EAST

Since peace with Persia was now assured – at least until Shapur had fought the Kushans – Valens could concentrate on the continued reorganization of the East. Over the course of the year he was to focus on reorganizing the defences against the Persians, on settling the easternmost provinces into the new order and on continuing the overhaul of the state finances, as evidenced by one of the few pieces of legislation passed by Valens to have survived.³² Unfortunately, despite the recent defeat of Persia, events would not run smoothly for him.

The Goths and Fritigern

Affairs in the Tervingian homeland are sparsely detailed and difficult to link chronologically. It is clear that Athanaric began a persecution of Christians aimed at their complete extermination in 370 and that this continued until at least 372.³³ The description of events in the *Passion of St Saba* demonstrates a clear division between the Gothic ruling classes and the ordinary people.³⁴ Although certainty is impossible, it is plausible that the imposition of the persecution, alongside the damage caused by the three-year war with Rome, created deep divisions within *Gothia*, not least between the Christians – plus those who supported their right to existence – and the hard-line pagans. Furthermore, worries began to emerge amongst the Gothic nobility that Athanaric had set his sights upon becoming ‘King’ of the Tervingi.³⁵

The result was a civil war, with the ‘loyalist’ forces being led by Athanaric and the ‘pro-Christian/anti-Royalist forces’ being led by a man named Fritigern. Sozomen states that Fritigern himself was a Christian, but claims that Fritigern was a Catholic, not an Arian.³⁶ The certain dating of events is impossible, but the little surviving evidence can be used to suggest that Fritigern was defeated in battle in 372 and appealed to the Emperor, his fellow Christian, for help.³⁷ With few other demands on the army, and despite the loss of units to the West, Valens could certainly spare troops to help Fritigern:

The barbarians, dwelling beyond the Danube, called the Goths, having engaged in a civil war among themselves, were divided into two parties, one of which was headed by Fritigern, the other by Athanaric. When the latter had obtained an evident advantage over his rival, Fritigern had recourse to the Romans, and implored their assistance against his adversary. This was reported to the Emperor Valens, and he ordered the troops which were garrisoned in Thrace to assist those barbarians who had appealed to him against their more powerful countrymen; and by means of this subsidy they won a complete victory over Athanaric beyond the Danube, totally routing the enemy.

To expedite the arrival of Roman troops Fritigern made a promise to Valens, and once victorious:

Fritigern, to express his sense of the obligation the emperor had conferred upon him, embraced the religion of his benefactor, and urged those who were under his authority to do the same.

Socrates 4.33

The Goths who were already Catholic Christians and the unconverted Goths who had supported Fritigern became Arian Christians, a decision which would have long and disastrous consequences for the empire in the future. In the meantime, however, Valens had formed a personal bond with a major Gothic leader which in theory could stand him in good stead in the future.

Armenia

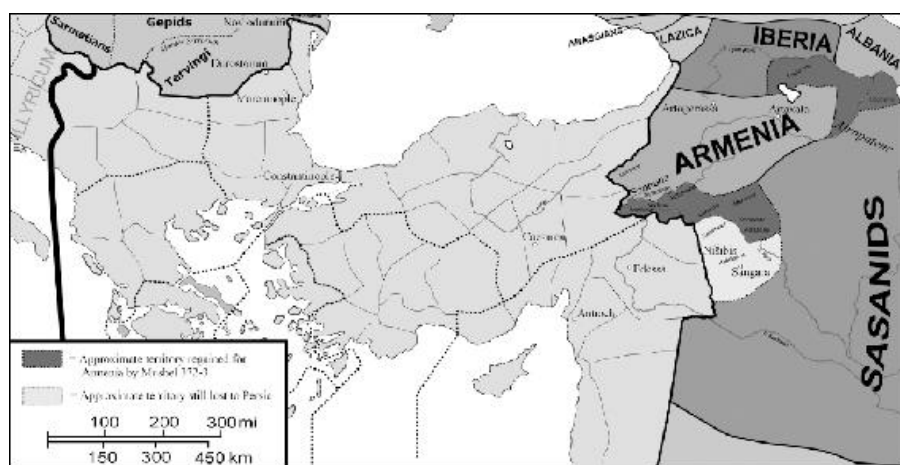
Either late in 371 or early in 372 Pap and the Armenian sparapet Mushel Mamikonean had begun the process of reversing Shapur's attempt to dismantle Armenia.³⁸ It is likely that Valens ordered his generals in Armenia not to get involved, and his refusal to treat with the defecting Armenians in a 'heavy-handed' manner eased the return in allegiance of the *nakharars* to the Arsacid house.³⁹ Furthermore, by refusing to take action, Valens assured that the Romans would be perceived as being 'neutral', so opening the way to co-operation with whichever faction came out victorious.⁴⁰

Slowly a combination of military and political pressure secured the return of Arzanene and Corduene.⁴¹ However, it was to be a long and difficult process, and Pap was to make several mistakes in his desperation to retake control of his kingdom. His first and greatest mistake may have been made either in late 371 or early 372 when he is alleged to have had the Armenian Patriarch Nerses killed and attempted to impose his own nominee, a man named Yusik.⁴² Although this account has been disputed, the fact that P'awstos believed this to have been the case most likely reflects a belief common amongst his countrymen. If this is true, hostility towards Pap will have greatly increased after Nerses' death, whatever the cause, with confusion and religious controversy intensifying.⁴³ To increase the pressure on the young king, the patriarch of Armenia had previously been anointed by the bishop of Caesarea, who refused to accept Yusik's elevation.

Furthermore, Pap apparently also began to dismantle Nerses' religious foundations, causing an even greater break with the Bishop of Caesarea and simultaneously with Valens, the nominal leader of the Christian Church in the East.⁴⁴ It has been suggested that a possible motive for the 'attack' on the Church was that Pap was not a Christian but a follower of 'Armenian Zoroastrianism'.⁴⁵ Although possibly true, there are other factors that need to be taken into account, especially that Armenia had suffered political and economic disruption, as well as large losses in manpower, due to the ongoing wars with Persia.

In this context, Armenian historians have interpreted Pap's actions in new ways. Included amongst these was a desire to bring the Church under royal control, rather than have it subordinate to the Bishop of Caesarea. Furthermore, as with Rome, the Christian Church appears to have been enriched by endowments by royal and noble benefactors. It is likely that one of Pap's major concerns was to recover some of the wealth granted to the church for the use of the royal treasury, in a similar manner to that employed by the Roman emperor Julian when he announced his apostasy. This was needed, as the cost of fighting almost-continuous wars will have been large. Supporting this theory is the fact that Pap does not appear to have infringed upon either the Church's doctrine or its hierarchical structure, both of which would probably have been changed by a supporter of Zoroastrianism.

With regard to the large losses in manpower, it is possible that the closure of monasteries and convents was an attempt to reintroduce the abstinent inhabitants to the gene pool in order to increase the population of the country. Interestingly, late in his reign Valens was also to mount political attacks upon monks, claiming that their lifestyle was simply a way of avoiding hard work.⁴⁶



Map 23. The East 372.

Unfortunately, certainty concerning the nature of Pap's interference in Church affairs is impossible, but what is clear is that the confusion resulted in the Bishop of Caesarea losing his claim to authority over the Armenian patriarchy, and the death of Nerses, followed by the perceived 'dismantling' of the Armenian Church, coupled with Pap's refusal to accept the authority of the bishop of Caesarea, resulted in a breakdown of Valens' trust in Pap.⁴⁷

This was exacerbated by the fact that Terentius, the Roman general in Armenia, was a devout Nicene, which made Terentius deeply unhappy both with Pap's murder of Nerses and the refusal to co-operate with the Bishop of Caesarea.⁴⁸ Furthermore, despite Valens' example of using tact and diplomacy

to win adherents, Pap used 'heavy handed' tactics towards the Armenian *nakharars*, with whom Terentius may have been co-operating in the reunification of the kingdom.⁴⁹

The evidence is debatable as it is unsupported by other sources, but P'awstos also states that Pap tried to adopt the traditional Armenian political ploy of playing the Persians off against the Romans. With the Romans firmly ensconced in Armenia, this was to prove difficult. Despite the inherent difficulties, Pap sent messengers to Shapur asking for support and boldly demanded that Valens yield Caesarea and ten other cities to him, since they had been founded by Armenians and so belonged to Armenia.⁵⁰

Finally running out of patience, Terentius sent messengers to Valens informing the emperor of current affairs and reminding Valens of Pap's previous execution of Cylaces and Artabanes and the king's attempt to defect to Shapur.⁵¹ Unfortunately, the chronology is extremely confused, so certainty is impossible, but allowing for the travelling speed of the messengers and the dating of later events it is possible that Terentius sent his message to Valens either late in 372 or early in 373. In the new year Valens would have to decide upon which course of action to take.

Famine

In the meantime, Valens would be more concerned with events in the region of 'Syrian' Edessa, in Osrhoene. Here, a poor harvest had created a localized famine and failure to help the natives could easily lead to at least some of them transferring their loyalties to Shapur in the hope of receiving aid from Persia.⁵² As the famine continued into the new year, doubtless Valens was forced to focus upon relieving the effects of the famine in order to forestall Persian gains in the area.⁵³

THE WEST

When the news of Firmus' rebellion arrived, Valentinian determined to crush the uprising as soon as possible. Valentinian quickly enacted laws aimed at enlarging the army and clarified the regulations as to who could be conscripted ready for the campaign in Africa.¹ Alongside the new laws Valentinian ordered a major reorganization of the army commanders.

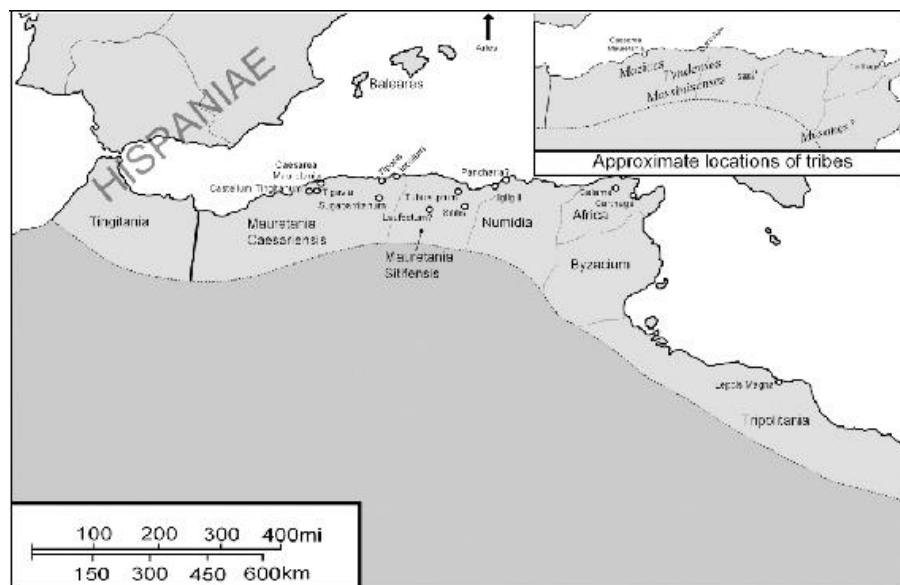
It would appear that Theodosius, who was at this time commanding in Illyricum and who had the year before successfully campaigned against the Sarmatians, was replaced by his son. The younger Theodosius was given the title *dux Moesiae Primae* (Duke of Lower Moesia), so allowing for Theodosius the elder to be deployed to Africa.²

Valentinian was also in communication with Valens. When Valens had been faced with Procopius' rebellion in 365 Valentinian had done little to help him. Now the roles were reversed. Although Firmus' rebellion was a 'purely Western' affair, and although the hypothesis is supposition based on analysis of primary documents – especially the *Notitia Dignitatum* – it would appear that Valens agreed to help Valentinian during the course of Theodosius' campaign in Africa. Prior to Theodosius leading the Illyrian troops to Africa to quell Firmus' rebellion, sixteen units of *iuniores* were sent from the East to the West, presumably to act as the new 'army of Illyricum'.³ Although the East was at peace, the move still represented a large loss of the Eastern army's manpower. When Valens once again needed to rely on the army in new wars, their loss would necessitate severe measures in order to replace them.

Theodosius and Africa⁴

After receiving instructions from Valentinian, Theodosius arranged for his troops to muster at Arles in Gaul. The names and number of the units he commanded is unknown, although the appearance of sixteen Eastern units in Illyricum suggests that up to sixteen units were taken from Illyricum, specifically Pannonia and Upper Moesia, for the campaign: Ammianus only states that he was given 'a small body of court troops' (*comitatensis auxilia militis pauci*).⁵ The only actual number given anywhere in Ammianus' account is Theodosius having 3,500 men preparing for a battle either in late 373 or early 374.⁶ However, this does not take into account troops left behind deployed as garrisons, and this army may have included troops native to

Africa, so the number cannot be taken as more than a rough guide.



Map 24. *Firmus in Africa 372–3.*

In spring 373 Theodosius left Arles and sailed to Africa, landing at Igilgili (Jijel/Djidjelli).⁷ However, he was not accompanied by his troops: using the same tactics that he had used for the recovery of Britain, Theodosius sailed ahead with only a few troops to reconnoitre the situation, leaving the rest to follow.⁸

From Igilgili Theodosius moved to Sitifis, where he found Romanus. After ‘mildly’ berating Romanus for his misconduct, Theodosius sent him to take charge of the frontier defences.⁹ It is probable that Gildo, Firmus’ brother and the only member of the family to oppose Firmus’ revolt, was also at Sitifis. Trusting Gildo’s loyalty, Theodosius sent him to arrest Vincentius, Romanus’ *vicarius* (second-in-command). Shortly after, Theodosius moved to Caesarea Mauretania.¹⁰

At last, Theodosius was joined by the troops who had been delayed by the sea crossing. Previously he appears to have been wary of making any move against Romanus: the *comes Africae* had now been in command in Africa for a decade and Theodosius will have been wary, since in that time Romanus will have established a firm power base. With his army to support him, Theodosius was now in a position to act: he returned to Sitifis and ordered Romanus to be dismissed and arrested and his papers searched.¹¹ In the course of the search evidence of alleged misconduct was found from the earlier period when Romanus was in collusion with Palladius.¹² On learning of the enquiry Palladius committed suicide.¹³ However, it was only in 377, after the death of Valentinian, that an enquiry into Romanus’ conduct was launched.

Although it was found that Romanus and his accomplices had deceived the now-deceased emperor, with outside political support they were acquitted.¹⁴

With Romanus in custody, Theodosius finally felt safe in Africa and began to formulate plans for the defeat of Firmus.¹⁵ Yet with the arrest of Romanus, Firmus appears to have believed that he would be able to clear his name. Ammianus claims that Firmus was also scared of Theodosius' military ability, and that this determined Firmus' next move. When the news of Romanus' arrest was confirmed, Firmus sent messages to Theodosius asking for pardon, laying the blame for the revolt firmly with Romanus.¹⁶

Theodosius accepted hostages from Firmus before moving to Pancharia to review the native troops, after which he returned with these units to Sitifis and combined the forces preparatory to a campaign against Firmus.¹⁷ At the same time he declared that loyal Roman citizens would not be required to supply the army: whatever stores were needed would be taken from the enemy.¹⁸

Leading the army to Tubusuptum, near Mount Ferratus, Theodosius was met by another delegation from Firmus. This was dismissed, since 'it had brought no hostages with it', despite earlier agreements.¹⁹ Although the developments are ignored by Ammianus, who had a high opinion of Theodosius, it is clear that Theodosius was intent upon defeating Firmus in battle, despite the fact that Firmus was attempting to avoid conflict.

Once the embassy had been declined and war had effectively been declared, Theodosius launched an attack on the Tyndenses and Masinissenses, two 'lightly armed' tribes led by Mascezel and Dius, brothers of Firmus.²⁰ The brothers were quickly defeated and the stronghold of Petrensis and the city of Laufoctum seized. Petrensis had been owned by Sammac, Firmus' brother, but appears to have been taken by the rebels: Theodosius ordered it to be razed. On the other hand, Laufoctum was to be retained and used as a military strongpoint to control the area. As a consequence, Theodosius ordered food from the surrounding territory to be stored in the city.²¹ However, Mascezel had not yet given up hope of victory: he recruited fresh troops and again offered battle to Theodosius, but once more was defeated and fled.²²

When news arrived with Firmus that his brothers had been defeated he sent a delegation composed of priests, accompanied by hostages, to Theodosius. Theodosius was amenable to talks and Firmus himself met with the Roman commander and a peace treaty was agreed. Firmus left some of his relatives as hostages and gathered a large amount of supplies for the Roman army. He left promising to release all of the captives he had taken and two days later the city of Icosium was restored to Theodosius, along with captured military standards and a large amount of booty.²³

Although he had accepted peace from Firmus, Theodosius was not prepared to allow the tribes who had supported the rebellion to go unpunished. Moving to Tipasa, Theodosius received envoys from the Mazices suing for peace. Theodosius refused the request and prepared a campaign against the rebellious tribe.²⁴

From Tipasa, Theodosius moved to Caesarea. The city had previously been taken and sacked by the rebels. The defences had been ruined and the population dispersed so Theodosius stationed the 'first and second legions' in the city, both to act as garrison and to repair the defences.²⁵ Theodosius remained for a time in Caesarea. Now that Theodosius was restoring the fortunes of Africa, many officials who had fled into hiding re-emerged and travelled to Caesarea. Theodosius instigated an inquiry into events, and was informed by the returning officials that, contrary to his promises, Firmus was preparing to attack the Romans whilst they were unprepared thanks to the peace.²⁶ This may be true, but alternatively Theodosius may have announced this as an excuse to continue a campaign which, in theory, should now have concluded. As Ammianus had a very high opinion of Theodosius, he may have accepted the claim at face value. At the same time, Theodosius was informed that the two units which had supported Firmus, the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis* and the *Constantianorum pedites*, were at Sugabarritanum on the slopes of Mount Transcellia.²⁷

Acting on the intelligence, Theodosius led the army to Sugabarritanum, where he found the majority of the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis* and the *Constantianorum pedites* still in residence. As an instant punishment the two units were downgraded to the 'lowest grade of service' and ordered to move with the army to Tigiviae.²⁸ At the same time, Gildo and Maximus returned, bringing Belles, a chief of the Mazices, and Fericius, a 'prefect' of the same tribe, both of whom had colluded with Firmus in the rebellion. The two were arrested and placed in chains.²⁹

The following day Theodosius ordered the army to surround the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis* and the *Constantianorum pedites*. He then ordered that the *Constantianorum pedites* be handed to the troops and 'punished in the old-fashioned way'. The meaning of the phrase is unclear, and possible punishments include decimation, or 'running the gauntlet'.³⁰ The commanders of the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis* had their hands cut off whilst the rest of the unit was 'killed'.³¹ As previously, the meaning of the sentence is unclear. Either the whole unit was killed, or possibly they were subjected to the same punishment as the *Constantianorum pedites*. Whatever form it took, the punishment was felt in some quarters to have been harsh, and Theodosius was later criticized for the act.³² In the same manner, Theodosius ordered the execution of Belles and Fericius, as well as Curandius, tribune of the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis*, the latter for cowardice rather than treachery.³³

From Tigiviae Theodosius led the army to a Moorish stronghold named Gaionatis, which he took by storm, and then advanced on Castellum Tingitanum, in the territory of the Mazices. Here he was compelled to fight a fierce battle, from which he emerged victorious. After the battle Theodosius, surprisingly, gave a pardon to the survivors.³⁴

At around this time a replacement arrived from Rome for Romanus and was

ordered to take some troops into Mauretania Sitifensis in order to guard the province, but unfortunately his name is lost in a *lacuna* in the text.³⁵ In the meantime, Theodosius continued his campaign, advancing into the territory of the Musones and marching towards the town of Adda. Nearing the town, Theodosius learned that Cyria, the sister of Firmus, had managed – partly through the use of her own personal wealth – to amalgamate a formidable army composed of many different tribes.³⁶

According to Ammianus, Theodosius only had 3,500 troops with him, and, deciding that discretion was the better part of valour, he ordered the troops to withdraw.³⁷ Heartened by the Roman retreat, the tribesmen pursued and finally caught up with Theodosius. The Romans were now threatened with annihilation, but as the tribesmen attacked a force of Mazices, with some Roman troops conspicuous at the front, came into view. Believing that a large number of Roman reinforcements were approaching, the attackers retreated, and Theodosius and his men were spared.³⁸

Over the new year Theodosius retreated to an estate named Mazucanus, where he repeated his earlier actions by mutilating some more of the *equites quartae sagittariorum cohortis* that he had captured by cutting off their hands, whilst other traitors were burnt alive. Finally, in February 374 he reached Tipasa, where he remained to rest, recuperate and plan the next phase of his campaign.³⁹

The Quadi

The exact nature and chronology of events along the Danube is unclear. Prior to his departure for Africa, in 372 Theodosius may have been compelled to fight an engagement with the Quadi.⁴⁰ His success seems to have stopped the Quadi from attacking the neighbouring provinces, with both sides agreeing to suspend hostilities whilst a deputation was sent to Valentinian.⁴¹ It would appear that, with war on two fronts – in Africa and against Macrianus – in the same year Valentinian had ordered a halt to the building work across the Danube and the Quadi had responded by remaining peaceful throughout the remainder of 372 and for a long time into 373.⁴² With the Danube at peace, Valentinian could happily confirm Theodosius' deployment to Africa. He was replaced in Illyricum by his son, also called Theodosius.

Unfortunately, in 373 a prefect in Illyricum named Maximinus accused Equitius, *magister armorum per Illyricum* (Master of the troops in Illyria), of failure to act regarding the completion of the fortifications across the Danube. He suggested that his own son, Marcellianus, should be appointed as *Dux per Valeriam* (Duke of Valeria: see Map 1), as then the forts would be quickly completed.⁴³ For an unknown reason the appointment was made and Marcellianus set out to complete the work, ignoring the protests of the Quadi.⁴⁴ The ramifications would be devastating to the West.

THE EAST

According to Themistius, in an oration given in March 373, there were Roman

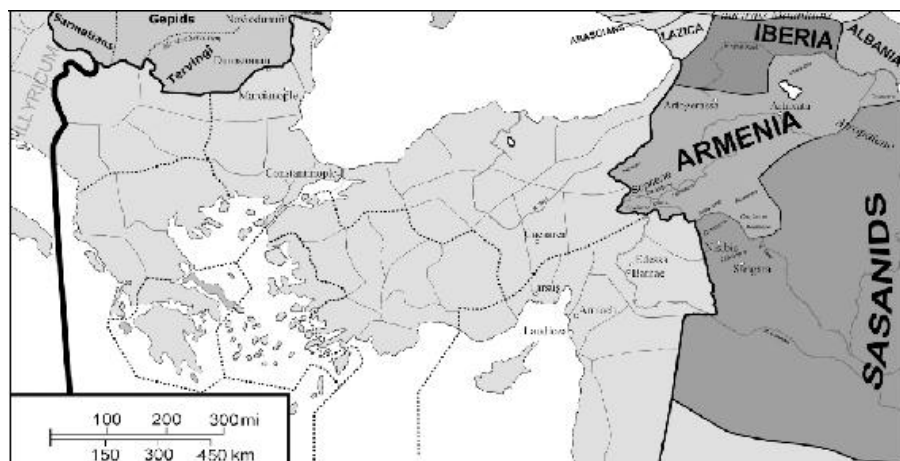
troops in the Caucasus, in Iberia and Albania and – obviously – in Armenia:⁴⁵ this was not counting the large force sent to Illyricum to help Valentinian.⁴⁶ Although Valens had not retaken the cities – especially Nisibis – occupied by the Persians in the Treaty of 363, he had overturned the majority of the remainder of the terms of the Treaty.

Yet despite these successes Valens still had several problems with which to deal. The most important of these were the deteriorating situation in Armenia and the continuation of the famine in Syrian Edessa.⁴⁷ Fortunately, the effects of the famine were not long lived, and as the year progressed life in Edessa slowly returned to a more normal footing, allowing Valens to focus upon his most pressing problem: Pap.⁴⁸

Finally conceding defeat in his attempts to enlist Pap as a firm ally, Valens sent orders to Terentius to arrest him.⁴⁹ Consequently, Pap was invited to a meeting at Tarsus in Cilicia, allegedly to discuss the continuing difficulties of re-uniting Armenia and eradicating Persian influence in the country.⁵⁰ Learning of the arrest plan, Pap determined to escape. He ordered his bodyguard of 300 men to gather together and they left the city.⁵¹

Unfortunately for Pap, a legion was sent in pursuit. The legion managed to catch up with him, and Pap quickly led a feint-assault on the pursuing troops, putting them to flight.⁵² Finally, after two days of forced marches, the king reached the banks of the Euphrates where he used the beds from local farmhouses, supported by inflated bladders, to cross the river to the far bank.⁵³

Dismayed by these events, and realizing that his hold on Armenia had been compromised, Valens sent two military commanders, Danielus and Barzimeres, to apprehend the king and ‘bring him back’ as a friend of Rome.⁵⁴ The two commanders quickly passed Pap on the road and set up two road blocks in order to waylay the king.⁵⁵ Being informed of the trap, Pap made plans to trick the Roman commanders into thinking he was falling into their trap before taking a little-used route past them, after which he reached Armenia, where he was received with joy.⁵⁶



Having failed to capture Pap, Danielus and Barzimeres determined to save themselves from the emperor's wrath at their failure and claimed that Pap had used sorcery in order to escape from their trap.⁵⁷ Valens, always ready to believe in acts of sorcery, appears to have accepted the claim.⁵⁸ Coupled with Pap's attack on the Roman legion, the accusation of sorcery ensured that Pap was now definitely an 'enemy of Rome'.⁵⁹

However, Valens now recognized that he had blundered in his handling of the affair. He still wanted to remove Pap, but knew that he had to change his immediate plans. Accordingly, probably in either late 373 or early 374, Valens removed Terentius from command in Armenia and replaced him with Traianus.⁶⁰ Traianus was under orders to befriend Pap in order to ensure that the attempt to arrest him was forgotten and that Pap recovered his trust in Valens.⁶¹ This was to be a slow process.

Yet there was one further effect of Valens' failed attempt to arrest Pap. Although Shapur was busy in the east dealing with the Kushans and so was unable to take direct action, he was kept aware of events in Armenia. Shapur now determined to gain Pap's allegiance, as this would effectively retake Armenia without bloodshed.

The Death of Athanasius of Alexandria⁶²

Easily overlooked by historians, one event of major importance occurred on 3 May 373 when Athanasius of Alexandria died.⁶³ Athanasius had been Bishop of Alexandria for around forty-five years (328–373), although for nearly twenty of these he had been in exile due to his opposition to the Arian creed favoured by Constantius II and Valens. By the time Valens had become emperor his position in Alexandria was such that any attempt to remove him would almost certainly lead to an outbreak of civil unrest in Egypt, the main source of grain for Constantinople. As a result, Valens allowed him to remain unmolested and was wary of the influence Athanasius held. His death marks a turning point in Valens' reign. Although, as has already been noted, some ecclesiastical histories describe Valens as an Arian who persecuted Nicene (Catholic) Christians, there is little actual evidence to support the claim prior to 373. It is clear that by 373 Valens was losing patience with the division of eastern Christianity and was determined to impose the Arian creed on the East. In January 373, before Athanasius had died, Valens had ordered that monks, those 'seekers of idleness', be forced back into Imperial service.⁶⁴

The fact that Valens began his attack on the Catholics prior to the death of Athanasius is often overlooked. However, there is a possible cause, although the hypothesis is open to criticism through a lack of supporting information. At some point between 372 and 375 the Goths had embarked upon a civil war, with the pagan Athanaric being opposed by the 'Christian' Fritigern.⁶⁵ After being defeated by Athanaric, Fritigern asked Valens for imperial support,

promising to become Arian should this prove successful.⁶⁶ Valens ordered the troops in Thrace to support Fritigern and the allies had won a victory over 'paganism'. If this battle took place in late 372, as suggested in Chapter 10, then the victory and conversion of the Goths to Arianism could easily have been interpreted by Valens as being proof that God was supporting him in his religious choice. Alongside this 'proof' was doubtless the continued pressure from his two Arian advisors, Eudoxius of Constantinople and Euzoius of Antioch. As a consequence, early in 373 Valens' attitude hardened and he began to put pressure on the Catholic Christians to convert to Arianism.

Shortly afterwards the death of Athanasius, a man who Valens obviously believed was a devout Christian and who, moreover, had strong personal support in Alexandria, removed a restraining influence on the emperor. From this point onwards the counsel of Eudoxius of Constantinople and Euzoius of Antioch came to the fore. Valens' timing could not have been worse: in 373 a large number of 'Arian' bishops in the East had followed Basil of Caesarea, who had worked out a method of allowing them to accept the Nicene faith. Basil was in contact with bishop (Pope) Damasus of Rome and Ambrose of Milan for a renewal of communion. Valens' actions, especially when seen against the attempt of many Arians to be allowed 're-entry' into the Catholic faith, would increase the perception of Valens being a heretical 'persecutor'.⁶⁷

Alongside Constantinople and Antioch, the see of Alexandria was one of the most important religious centres of the East. With the former two already in the hands of Arian bishops, Euzoius encouraged Valens to impose an Arian bishop named Lucius on Alexandria.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, Athanasius had already organized a successor, an individual named Peter.

Shortly after Athanasius' death Valens sent orders to Aelius Palladius, the Prefect of Egypt, who consequently arrested Peter.⁶⁹ However Peter escaped and headed for the safety of Rome.⁷⁰ In the meantime, infuriated by Valens' intervention, riots erupted in Alexandria and the mob desecrated the Arian church of Theonas.⁷¹ Not knowing of the riots but aware of the strength of Nicene support, in the meantime Valens gathered a small army, commanded by Vindaonius Magnus, *comes sacrarum largitionum* (Count of the Imperial Largesses). This army accompanied Euzoius and the emperor's appointee, Lucius, to Egypt, where Euzoius consecrated Lucius as Bishop of Alexandria.

It has been suggested that Valens did not intend for his actions to provoke such a high level of unrest in Alexandria, and that all he desired was to impose his own choice as Bishop of Alexandria and reverse the dominance of the Nicenes in the city.⁷² To some degree this may be justified: it was probably the strength of the protests that caused some surprise, especially taking into account Valens' own violent response to the unrest. However, it is clear from the start that Valens knew that imposing Lucius as bishop would cause trouble, otherwise he would not have sent Magnus and an army contingent to enforce the appointment.

The Persecution Escalates

Once aware of the unrest, Valens instigated a purge of Nicene clerics in Egypt, and Nicene bishops and priests were rounded up and put on trial before being tortured and exiled. Many protesters were also arrested and sent to work in the mines.⁷³ From this point Valens' actions towards the Nicene Christians can at last be seen as becoming the persecution described in the histories, although even here Valens tended to use banishment rather than execution as his 'punishment' for Nicenes: this was not to be a persecution as described by earlier church historians, with thousands of Christians being killed in an attempt to eradicate their beliefs. Furthermore, the change of policy was not instant, but with the death of Athanasius one of the main obstructions to Arianism in the east had been removed and Valens was determined to take full advantage of the breakthrough before the Nicenes could organize any resistance.

Following his successful imposition of Lucius, Valens turned his attention to the other major Christian centres in the East. In September 373 Barsees, Bishop of Edessa, and his followers were expelled from the city, beginning a series of expulsions that continued between 373 and 375.⁷⁴ For example, the Bishop of Batnae was expelled, as was Pelagius of Syrian Laodicea (Latakea).⁷⁵ Slowly, religious disputes began to dominate political life in the East.

Yet the outlook was not all gloomy. On a more positive note, under Clearchus, prefect of the city of Constantinople, Constantine's new 'capital' finally received the water supplies needed for its large population with the completion of aqueducts into the city.⁷⁶ Yet despite these internal events Valens' main focus will have remained fixed on Armenia and Persia.



The Colossus of Barletta, thought by many to be Valentinian I.



Bust of Valens, currently in the Musei Capitolini.



Bust of Gratian from Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Trier.



Close up of a statue of Valentinian II.



Plate depicting Shapur II, housed in the British Museum.



Shapur II (after Rawlinson).



Head of Shapur II.



Coin showing Valentinian I, minted at Constantinople. (Courtesy of www.wildwinds.com and CNG, www.cngcoins.com)



Coin showing Valens, minted at Constantinople. (Courtesy of www.wildwinds.com and CNG, www.cngcoins.com)



Coin showing Valentinian II, minted at Constantinople. (Courtesy of www.wildwinds.com)



Valentinian I Medallion. (*Portable Antiquities Scheme*)



Coin of Procopius minted at Constantinople. (*Courtesy of www.wildwinds.com and Numismatica Ars Classica, NAC AG*)



Valens Medallion. (*Portable Antiquities Scheme*)



View of a raised beach with a wave cut notch and sea caves uplifted by about 9 m during the earthquake of 365 (About 2 km west of Paleochora, Western Crete).



The effects of the Tsunami of 365 – the sinking of the Apollonia Pier (Jona) Libya.



The Basilica of Constantine I, Trier, undoubtedly used by Valentinian I during his reign.



The Porta Nigra (Black Gate) at Trier, one of the few remaining Roman gateways to a major city.



The Zahringer Burgberg, an Alamannic residence built with Roman help during the reign of Valentinian I.



The Djurdjura mountain range in Africa, amongst whose peaks Theodosius sought to repress the rebellion of Firmus.



Mount Ferratus, near which Theodosius defeated the Masinissenses and the Tyndenses under Mascezel, brother of Firmus.



The aqueduct built by Valens to supply Constantinople with water.



The source of the Danube in Donaueschingen (modern Germany) as presented today.



River Breg (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), probably the true source of the Danube. It is unknown which of the two sources Valentinian 'discovered'.



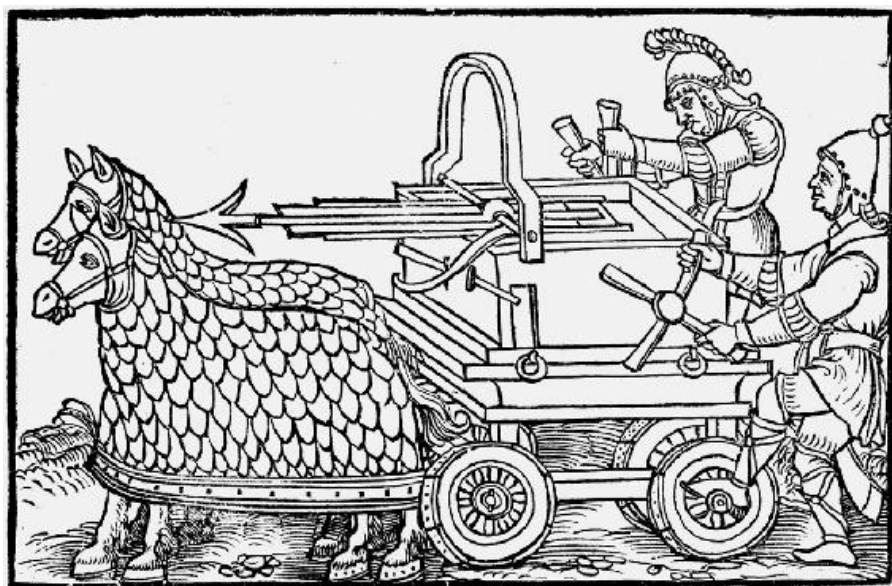
The ruins of the Palace at Carnuntum, the town chosen as the base by Valentinian for his campaigns against the Quadi.



The Roman amphitheatre at Brigetio. Valentinian I died in this city.



A nineteenth-century depiction of Valens and Athanaric concluding their treaty on the Danube.



Reconstruction of a 'Ballista quadrirotis' from the *Notitia utraque cum orientis tum occidentis ultra Arcadii Honorique Caesarum tempora* (1552, edited by Sigismund Gelenius). This part is from the *De Rebus Bellicis*.



A view of the Rhodope Mountains. The Goths were pinned in these mountains by Roman military activity during the Gothic Rebellion.



Ruins of the Gate of Trajan, at the Succi Pass. This fortification was almost certainly defended during the Gothic Rebellion to prevent the Goths crossing into Italy.



Fritzsche's nineteenth-century painting, 'The Goths Invade the Empire'. The image of the 'barbarian horde' so popular in the nineteenth century is well represented here.



Another nineteenth-century romantic depiction of the 'barbarian' Goths, the 'Visigoths Crossing the Danube', may actually be nearer to the mark than other paintings: 'They crossed the stream day and night, without ceasing, embarking in troops on board ships and rafts, and canoes made of the hollow trunks of trees ... a great many were drowned, who, because they were too numerous for the vessels, tried to swim across' (AM 31.4.5).

THE WEST

The Alamanni

At the start of the year Valentinian made yet another attempt to defeat Macrianus in battle. Although no details of the campaign survive, Valentinian appears to have forced Macrianus to retreat, then set about building a new fort near to Basle. In early autumn he was told of an attack by the Quadi and Sarmatians on the Danube.¹ His first instinct was to lead the army to the troubled area and as ‘autumn was waning’ he began preparations to leave for Illyricum. However, he was dissuaded by his advisors, who noted that without Valentinian and the army the Rhine would be defenceless against Macrianus.² Convinced by their arguments, Valentinian instead simply despatched a relief force of Gallic reinforcements to the troubled area.³

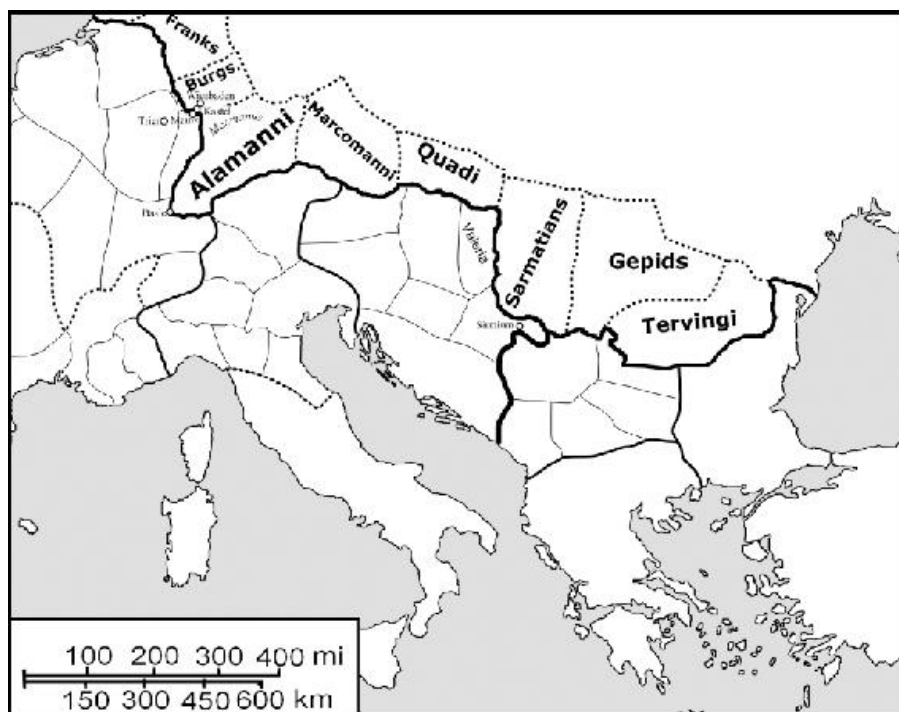
The Quadi and Sarmatians

Late in 373 Marcellianus, son of Maximinus, had been appointed as *Dux per Valeriam* (Duke of Valeria) with orders to continue the building of forts on the far bank of the Danube, ignoring the previous protests of the Quadi.⁴ When building resumed the local king, Gabinius, sent polite messengers to Marcellianus requesting that he stop the work again. Marcellianus accepted the request and invited Gabinius to a banquet. Gabinius attended the banquet, but as he left he was murdered, allegedly on the order of Marcellianus.⁵

Outraged by the ‘atrocious deed’, the Quadi and the surrounding tribes took up arms and in autumn 374 invaded Pannonia. The assault was at harvest time, and many Roman citizens were either killed or captured in their fields. The attack was so sudden and unexpected that Constantia, the daughter of the deceased emperor Constantius II, was nearly captured by marauding bands of barbarians as she was on her way to the West to marry Gratian.⁶

Retreating with their spoils, the Quadi regrouped and launched a second assault, this time in conjunction with their neighbours the Sarmatians, the mobility of the latter ensuring that the attacks were more widespread than before.⁷ After an initial panic the praetorian prefect Probus, who at the start of the attacks was in Sirmium, ordered the city’s defences to be repaired and summoned a nearby ‘cohort of archers’ (*sagittariorum cohortem*) to help garrison the city.⁸ His initial panic suggests that Probus was not the best man for the task, especially when the information is coupled with the note in

Jerome's *Chronicle* that Probus had 'destroyed the provinces that he was ruling by the most iniquitous extractions of tribute, even before they were devastated by the barbarians'.⁹ Fortunately for Probus, Sirmium was not the main target of the Quadi. Believing that Equitius was responsible for the death of Gabinius, and learning that he was heading for the 'remote spaces of Valeria', the Quadi set off in pursuit.¹⁰



Map 26. *Quadi and Sarmatians.*

Shortly afterwards news reached the Romans of the barbarians' plans and two units of elite *legiones palatinae*, the *Pannoniciani seniores* and the *Moesiaci seniores* were sent in pursuit of the enemy chasing Equitius. Unfortunately, the two units failed to co-operate effectively, and they were defeated piecemeal by the Quadi and Sarmatians, with the Moesiaci being overpowered first. Survivors of the attack fled for safety.¹¹ Losing track of Equitius, but sure that resistance was now minimal, both the Quadi and the Sarmatians dispersed their armies over a wide area in order to seize as much booty as possible.¹²

Although the situation was desperate, the fact that the attackers had dispersed their forces was to be their undoing. In his first recorded military command and in a series of small but fierce engagements Theodosius, son of the *comes* Theodosius, drove the Sarmatians out of Roman territory and back across the Danube.¹³ With the Sarmatians defeated, the Quadi were slowly

hunted down and penned in to smaller and smaller areas. Quickly losing faith in their ability to win, the Quadi sent envoys to Theodosius asking for peace terms. These were granted, and, although no details survive, it is doubtless the least that they were forced to do was to release all prisoners and return all of their booty before being allowed to return home.¹⁴

Macrianus

In the meantime, Valentinian now had wars to fight on three fronts. It was clear that the imperial forces were incapable of meeting such widespread demands, so Valentinian finally came to the conclusion that peace was needed on at least one front. Politically, he could not afford to pardon Firmus in Africa, as this could easily lead to further revolts against his rule. Moreover, an unexpected attack by the Quadi could not go unpunished as the affair could easily set a precedent, encouraging other tribes along the northern frontier to attack the empire. The only choice left was to come to terms with Macrianus.

Macrianus had been attacked, had been replaced by a man loyal to Rome and had then suffered further attacks by Valentinian, yet the loyalty of his people to their leader remained firm. No sources explain why he was able to carry on the war for such an extended period, but his later actions may give a clue. Macrianus was a man to whom loyalty and honesty appears to have been paramount. He had obviously been badly treated and then betrayed by Valentinian, and therefore 'the more pressure Valentinian put upon Macrianus, the more powerful Macrianus became', as his supporters indignantly responded to his cause.¹⁵

Yet this was not the first time that an emperor would be forced by external circumstances to shorten a war and reach an agreement with an external enemy without first having defeated that enemy in battle. In 369 Valens had been forced to come to terms with Athanaric when faced with war against Persia.¹⁶ Valentinian now made arrangements for a similar peace with Macrianus.¹⁷

Valentinian sent envoys to Macrianus, courteously inviting him to a meeting on the Rhine at Moguntiacum (Mainz).¹⁸ The details of the meeting are a little confused. Ammianus notes that Macrianus remained on the far bank of the Rhine but does not clarify whether Valentinian took a boat to the centre of the river and conducted the negotiations from there, or whether he crossed to the far bank and the meeting was held on dry land.¹⁹ However, as the negotiations were 'protracted', it is probably safer to assume that Valentinian landed on the far bank of the Rhine.²⁰

Eventually, a treaty was concluded. In a similar agreement to that reached earlier between Athanaric and Valens, the Alamanni would be limited to two centres of exchange and the payment of 'subsides' to Macrianus was stopped.²¹ This would be a blow to the Alamanni, since prior to the eruption of war in 367 the whole of the Rhine frontier was open to trade.²² On the other side, Valentinian appears to have relinquished all territory on the far bank of

the Rhine to Macrianus, with the possible exceptions of Kastel and Weisbaden.²³ The long Alamannic War was finally over. Interestingly, given the animosity that had existed between them for several years, ‘up to the very end of his life he [Macrianus] gave proof by noble conduct of a spirit of steadfast loyalty’.²⁴ It is not surprising that the Alamanni were willing to support such a noble leader in his long war with Valentinian.

After the treaty had been agreed, Macrianus returned to rebuild his people’s homes, whilst Valentinian returned to Trier ready to travel east in 375 to face the Quadi and Sarmatians.

Africa

In Africa, Theodosius had nearly suffered a catastrophic defeat in the last action of the previous campaign. Theodosius spent the next few months at Tipasa recuperating and contemplating his next move. The defeat appears to have dented Theodosius’ arrogance and over-confidence. Arriving in Africa, he had been determined to punish the tribes that had supported Firmus. After a long period of contemplation he realized that he needed to win the allegiance of the Moorish tribes rather than continue to alienate them by launching attacks even when the tribes had sued for peace. Accordingly, Theodosius began diplomatic initiatives aimed at reducing Firmus’ strength by sending envoys to the surrounding tribes promising an alliance and pardons for those who had previously aided Firmus.²⁵

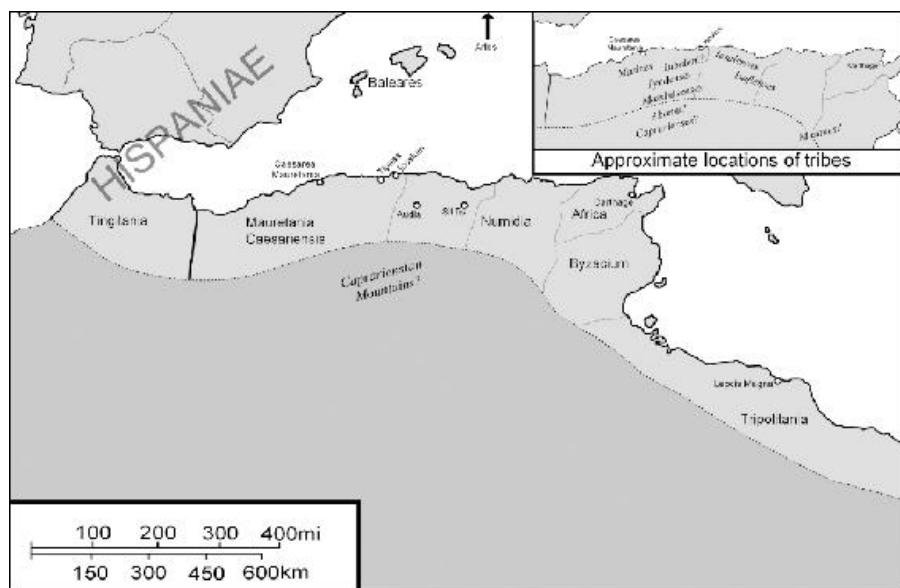
The diplomatic initiative had one major effect: despite being in control of the large army collected by Cyria, Firmus lost his nerve and fled towards the Caprariensian Mountains; it would appear that Theodosius’ diplomatic moves were aimed at the tribes currently forming the bulk of Firmus’ army. With their leader in flight, the rebel army disintegrated, and Theodosius’ forces were able to defeat in detail those parts that remained loyal to the rebellion.²⁶

Theodosius himself pursued Firmus, en route defeating the Caprarienses and the Abanni before reaching the city of Audia. Here he learnt that Firmus was seeking refuge in the inaccessible high peaks of the mountains, and Theodosius accordingly withdrew his troops, retreating to areas less prone to guerrilla attack. Firmus put the respite to good use, recruiting fresh troops whose loyalty was secure from amongst the ‘Aethiopians’.²⁷

Leading his new army out of the mountains, Firmus forced Theodosius into a hasty retreat, according to Ammianus through the threat of sheer numbers. However, Theodosius quickly regrouped his forces, gathered supplies and returned to give battle.²⁸ Advancing in a hollow-square formation, Theodosius appears to have pushed aside the enemy and advanced to the city of Conta, where Firmus had held his captives. Theodosius took the city and released the captives, in the process capturing more of Firmus’ followers. These were treated in the now-traditional manner, losing their hands and/or their lives.²⁹

Defeated, Firmus fled to the Isafenses, with Theodosius in hot pursuit. Learning that both Firmus and his brother Mazuca were being given sanctuary

by the tribe, Theodosius demanded their surrender. The Isafenses refused, so Theodosius attacked. A fierce battle was fought, during the course of which Firmus fought bravely, but his brother Mazuca was severely wounded and captured. Eventually, resistance collapsed and Firmus fled. Theodosius ordered the captive Mazuca to be taken to Caesarea, but, realizing what his future held in store, Mazuca tore his wound open and he died. His body was decapitated and his head taken to Caesarea.³⁰ Following the battle Theodosius quickly overwhelmed the Isafenses, ordering some of their leaders to be burned for their treachery.³¹



Map 27. Firmus in Africa 374.

Theodosius now turned his attention to Firmus' own tribe, the Iubaleni. He forced his way to the heartland of the tribe, but was balked by the fact that the tribesmen had retreated to the fastnesses of their mountains. Wary of attacking a strong defensive position, Theodosius retired to Audia, where he was approached by envoys from the tribe of the Iesalenses, who surrendered.³² Firmus' support was fast eroding.

At some point after his arrival at Audia Theodosius was informed that Firmus had left the Iubaleni, whose loyalty to Firmus was assured, and was intent on gathering support from other tribes. Theodosius set off in pursuit. Arriving at the 'castle' of Medianum, he was informed that Firmus had returned to the Isafenses. Heartened by his earlier victories over the tribe, Theodosius moved to attack.³³ As the two armies approached, Theodosius met with their king, Igmazen, who again refused to hand Firmus to the Romans.³⁴

The following day, the two armies met in a fierce battle. The Isafenses, said by Ammianus to have 20,000 men in the van, with 'bands of reserves

concealed behind them', were supported by the Iesalenses, the same tribe that had recently surrendered to Theodosius.³⁵ Outnumbered and surrounded, the Romans adopted the 'tortoise formation' (*in testudinis formiam*) and resisted attacks from daybreak until near sunset. Towards the end of the day Firmus approached the Roman lines and appealed to the Roman army to surrender Theodosius before they were overwhelmed, reminding them of Theodosius' cruel treatment of his captives.³⁶ Some of the troops now lost heart and abandoned their positions, but fortunately for Theodosius the remainder continued to oppose the rebels.³⁷

Theodosius was saved by the coming of night. Withdrawing the army in the darkness, Theodosius retired to Duodia, where he punished the deserters in his traditional manner, burning some and cutting the hands off others.³⁸ At the same time the rebels attempted a night attack on the Romans, but this was quickly driven back, some of the enemy being captured.³⁹

Defeated in battle, Theodosius adopted an oblique approach, marching around the rebel forces and devastating the lands of the Isafilenses from an unexpected quarter. Yet he was not prepared to risk another direct confrontation with the enemy: having avenged to some degree his defeat, Theodosius now withdrew via Mauretania Caesarea to Sitifis.⁴⁰

After a short period to recuperate – and possibly to gather fresh troops, although this is not mentioned by Ammianus – Theodosius renewed the attacks on the Isafilenses. This time he was victorious in a battle and Igmazen, king of the Isafilenses, grew weary of the conflict. According to Ammianus he sent secret messages to Theodosius stating that if Theodosius continued his attacks on the Isafilenses their resistance would collapse. Theodosius did as he had been advised and maintained the pressure on the tribe.⁴¹

Sensing that the will to resist was weakening amongst the Isafilenses, Firmus determined to escape, but Igmazen was keeping a close eye on him and before he could flee Igmazen took Firmus into custody. At this point Firmus learnt of the secret negotiations between Theodosius and Igmazen, and realized that he was to be handed over to Theodosius. Rather than being executed after extreme torture by the Romans, Firmus committed suicide. His body was sent to Theodosius in his camp at Subicata, and late in 374 the Roman army returned to Sitifis. The rebellion was over.⁴²

Aftermath

Gildo, the brother of Firmus who had remained loyal to Rome, was retained in Roman service. In 386 he was promoted to the post of *comes et magister utriusque militiae per Africam* (Count and Master of the Troops in Africa), but in 398 he rebelled against the 'rule' of Stilicho, was defeated and committed suicide. Surprisingly, Mascezel, the brother of Firmus who had remained loyal to the rebellion, was pardoned. In 398 Mascezel was in command of the successful campaign against his brother Gildo after Gildo had rebelled. Following his victory Mascezel died when he fell into a river

and drowned, allegedly being pushed into the torrent on the orders of Stilicho.⁴³ The fates of Dius and Cyria are not recorded.

THE EAST

In direct contrast to affairs in the West, there is very little information regarding events in the East in 374. It is clear that the persecutions begun in 373 continued, for example with Eusebius of Samosata being ordered into exile, but unfortunately the lack of detailed sources allows no analysis or description of these events.⁴⁴

Armenia

With reference to Armenia, in early 374 Traianus began his political campaign to regain Pap's trust. Although the chronology is not clear, it will have taken time for this to happen: convincing Pap that Valens was not going to insist on reprisals for Pap's behaviour will not have been easy. In the meantime, one of the main consequences of Pap's previous flight was his acceptance that Valens was now potentially an enemy. Aware of this event, Shapur was determined to gain Pap's allegiance, as this would effectively retake Armenia without bloodshed, and as a result Pap began receiving envoys from Shapur requesting that he change sides.

Pap was now in a difficult position. On the one hand he had alienated the Romans by his actions, both by (allegedly) attempting to dismantle the Church as well as attacking a Roman legion as he had fled. On the other hand, there was still a large Roman army in Armenia and he could not simply change allegiance to Shapur, since this would obviously lead to an alliance of the pro-Roman commanders – especially Mushegh – with the Romans, most likely leading to his own expulsion in favour of one of his more compliant relatives.

Alongside the claim in Ammianus that Danielus and Barzimeres had accused Pap of sorcery – in the eyes of the Christian Valens a hideous crime – the news that Shapur was attempting to negotiate with Pap finally sealed the king's fate.⁴⁵ Terentius was ordered to continue the attempt to regain Pap's trust before arranging for the assassination of the Armenian king.⁴⁶ Traianus followed his orders, and, having finally convinced the king of his sincerity, he invited Pap to a feast near the Roman camps in Armenia.⁴⁷ Pap arrived and began the banquet, during the course of which:⁴⁸

Suddenly two of the legionaries who stood behind [Pap], bearing shields with gold bosses, raised their battle-axes and struck king Pap. One cut his neck while the other battle-axe sliced off his right hand, which was on the handle of his sabre ... King Pap fell on his face then and there. The wine from the goblet, the blood from his neck and [Pap's] body fell together on to the table as king Pap perished immediately. In the confusion arising in the [tent], Gnel, lord of the Anjewac'ik' district, arose from his couch, drew his

sword, and struck and killed one of the legionaries who had killed the king. Then the Byzantine general Terentius drew his own sword and cut off Gnel's head above the eyes. And no one could say anything about it. Not a thing.

BP 5.32

The account given by Moses Khorenats'i – that Pap rebelled against Roman rule, was captured by Terentius, and then sent to Constantinople before being executed – must be discounted due to the severe confusion prevalent throughout the description.⁴⁹

According to P'awstos the Armenians were furious: their king had been 'assassinated' by his erstwhile ally. However, there was little they could do:

There gathered together all the grandee princes of Armenia, *sparapet* Mushegh [Mushel Mamikonean], and Hayr *mardpet*. All of the princes asked: 'What shall we do, how shall we act? Should we seek to avenge our king or not?' Then they confirmed in discussion that: 'We cannot enter the service of the pagan Iranians and make an enemy of the Byzantine [Romans₅₀] emperor, nor can we make enemies of both of them. But we cannot survive without the aid of one of them.' They reached the conclusion that what had happened was past. 'Let us serve the Byzantine emperor and remain obedient to the authority of the Byzantine Empire, and do as it says.' In no way did they plan to seek vengeance or to do anything else. Rather, they passed over it in silence.

BP 5.33

In effect, the Armenian *nakharars*, who were Christian, had no choice but to accept Valens' alliance against the 'Pagan' Shapur. Religion was again to be a deciding element in mediating the struggle for Armenia. However, it should be noted that at least one of Shapur's loyal allies – Urnayr of Albania – was also a Christian and had little trouble accepting the alliance with Shapur.⁵¹ It would appear that the *nakharars* expected Shapur to take drastic anti-Christian action should he be allowed a free hand in Armenia, a country prone to political turmoil: Albania, on the other hand, appears to have been far more stable than its neighbour and so less in need of Persian intervention.

Yet Valens now had an ally without a leader:

After the death of king Pap of Armenia, the Byzantine emperor made a certain Varazdat the king. He was from the same Arsacid *tohm* (dynasty). He came with much pomp, entered the country of Armenia, and ruled as king. He was a youth, full of bravery, with powerful hands, a brave heart, but light-minded, with a child's capricious cunning. However when all ... of Armenia's grandees saw him, they gathered around him and were delighted that he would reign over them.

Varazdat was as yet too young to rule alone, so Mushel Mamikonean was accepted as the regent until Varazdat came of age. Fortunately, Mushel Mamikonean was the leading member of a family which was notoriously pro-Roman.⁵² As a result:

Mushegh [Mushel Mamikonean], the *sparapet* of Armenia, was leading Armenia, protecting all the borders as was his custom, and he offered good advice to the young king Varazdat. He was constantly concerned about the kingdom of the land of Armenia, how it might be kept/made to flourish. He was always giving good advice so that the kingdom could remain secure. He also consulted with the Byzantine princes, and through them with the emperor that they should build 'cities' in the country of Armenia. [He suggested] that secure, walled military bases [be constructed] one in every district with a city, and two where there were two [cities] throughout the entire country of Armenia, as far as Ganjak on the Iranian side, which was on the border of Armenia. [He proposed] that all the Armenian *azats* should be provided with imperial stipends, as well as the troops of the country of Armenia. Thus there would be full attention directed at their enemy, the Iranian troops. The Byzantine emperor was overjoyed to do this, for in this manner the land would be totally secure and not move away from him, and the king of Iran would be unable to make the land of Armenia his own.

BP 5.34

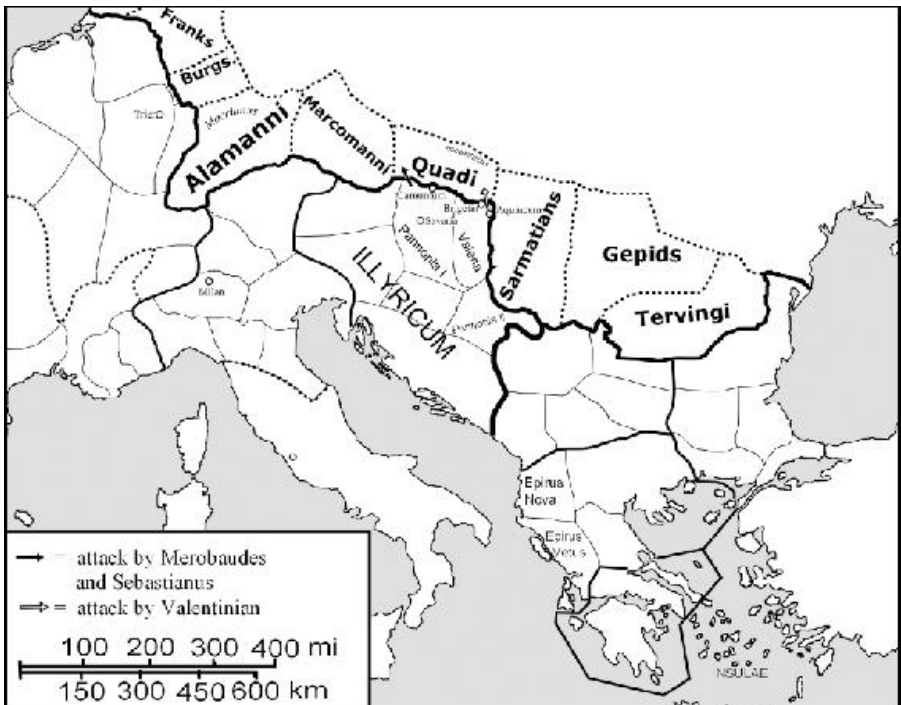
Valens could now, in theory at least, rely on the total loyalty of the Armenians under Varazdat and Mushel Mamikonean. The timing was propitious: Shapur's wars against the Kushans appear to have been drawing to a close and by the summer of 375 Shapur had returned to face the Romans. Any delay on Valens' part may have resulted in Valens having to face the full might of the returning Persian army in Armenia.⁵³

Chapter 13

375

THE WEST

Over the winter of 374–375 Valentinian remained in Trier, finalizing the details of the treaty with Macrianus and making arrangements for the defence of the Rhine. In spring 375 Valentinian finally moved his court to Illyricum, in preparation for a campaign on the Danube.¹ As he entered Pannonia he was met by a Sarmatian delegation pleading for peace and claiming that they had not been involved in the attack. He responded that he would accept their claim if it were proved by a thorough investigation.² Shortly afterwards, he entered the town of Carnuntum, in the Prefecture of Illyricum. According to Ammianus, although the town was deserted and in ruins, it was the ideal strategic location for a campaign against the Quadi.³



Map 28. *The Campaign Against the Quadi*

Strangely, Valentinian did not order an investigation into the events surrounding the assassination of Gabinius, King of the Quadi, which implies that by this date such actions were an accepted part of imperial policy under Valentinian and Valens.⁴ He had received a delegation from Epirus which revealed the financial oppression that Probus – *praefectus praetorio per Illyrici, Italiae et Africae* (Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum, Italy and Africa) – had inflicted on Illyricum. Leo, the *magister officiorum* (master of Offices), wanted to take Probus' place as praetorian prefect, so added 'blazing fuel' to Valentinian's anger.⁵ The attempt was in vain: it was Leo who was shortly after dismissed from office.⁶

Valentinian remained at Carnuntum over the three summer months, preparing arms and supplies for the upcoming campaign and doubtless repairing the city walls.⁷ Once the preparations were complete, Valentinian ordered Merobaudes, the newly appointed *magister peditum*, along with the *comes* Sebastianus to plunder and burn the territories on the north-western flank of the territory belonging to the Quadi.⁸ Valentinian himself led the remainder of the army to Aquincum (Ofen), where he built a pontoon bridge across the Danube and invaded from the south east.⁹ Unfortunately for Valentinian, the delay and build-up of supplies at Carnuntum had forewarned the Quadi that they were about to be attacked, so even before the invasion the majority of the tribes had already withdrawn to the mountains.¹⁰

Despite the fact that he would clearly be unable to meet the Quadi in open battle, Valentinian led his troops in a fast campaign, during the course of which the few captives he managed to take were all killed in revenge for the Quadic attack on Pannonia. After ravaging Quadic territory, Valentinian returned to Aquincum and passed the remainder of autumn in the town whilst determining where to billet the army for winter.¹¹ He finally determined to use the town of Savaria (Stein-am-Anger) for the purpose, although it had been repeatedly attacked. However he decided that the court would spend the winter at Brigetio (Szoeny).¹² Strangely, and interpreted by Ammianus as a bad omen, an owl was seen to perch on the imperial bath in Savaria, where it 'uttered notes foretelling death' and could not be scared from its position.¹³ As a further bad omen, Valentinian decided that he would leave Savaria by the same gate that he had entered, but when the attempt was made it was found that the doors on the gate had collapsed and a path could not be made for the emperor, who had to leave by a different gate.¹⁴ Later it was observed that other bad omens, including comets and a thunderbolt setting fire to part of the imperial palace, the senate house and the forum at Sirmium, had also occurred.¹⁵

Arriving at Brigetio, on the night of 16 November Valentinian had a dream that his wife was dressed in mourning. Disturbed by the dream, when he awoke he dressed and went to mount his horse. The horse reared and refused to let him mount. In a fit of anger, Valentinian ordered that the groom's right hand, which had failed to control the horse, be chopped off. Fortunately,

Cerealis, the tribune of the stable, postponed the punishment, although he risked his own life in doing so.¹⁶

On the same day, 17 November, audience was given to Quadic envoys that had arrived requesting peace, in return promising to provide troops for the army, as well as ‘other things helpful to the Roman state’. Prior to their admittance, it had been decided that their request be granted, especially as the lateness of the year and the lack of supplies for a campaign meant that Valentinian was not going to attack again before the new campaign season.¹⁷

However, during the audience the envoys claimed that not all of the Quadi had been involved in the attacks and that the majority of hostile acts were actually carried out by ‘bands of foreign brigands dwelling near the river’. Unfortunately, they went on to claim that even so the building of a Roman fort on their territory was a valid excuse for an attack on Pannonia.¹⁸

At this Valentinian lost his temper and ‘railed at the whole nation in noisy and abusive language’. As he finished the tirade and was calming down again his demeanour changed: he appeared to be ‘speechless and suffocating’, obviously suffering from an apoplectic fit. He was rushed from the audience chamber to a private room, where attempts were made to alleviate his condition. These failed and shortly afterwards he died, aged 54.¹⁹

Aftermath

Prior to the death of Valentinian one major decision had already been made: the war against the Quadi was halted and the bridge over the Danube was demolished.²⁰ Valentinian’s body was prepared for the journey to Constantinople for burial, and the officers at Brigetio agonized over their next move. Fortunately, the *magister militum*, Merobaudes, had already been summoned to court by Valentinian before his death and therefore arrived before news of Valentinian’s death had spread.²¹ It was quickly decided that Merobaudes, supported by Equitius, *magister militum per Illyricum*, should take control of events.

According to Ammianus, they were fearful of what actions the troops in Gaul would take, especially as Gratian, who was only sixteen, was vulnerable since he was isolated in Trier. In addition, the fact that they needed to ‘secure the loyalty of the Illyrian army to the dynasty’ may have been high on their list of priorities: after all, there were several individuals who could easily usurp the throne from the inexperienced and youthful Gratian.²² The most viable candidate was Sebastianus.²³ It was quickly decided that Sebastianus would be deployed away from the main bodies of troops in case the Illyrian army decided to acclaim him as emperor in opposition to Gratian.²⁴

Taking counsel, it was also decided that Valentinian, the namesake four-year-old son of the recently deceased emperor, should be ‘given a share in the title’. At the time he was living with his mother Justina, Valentinian’s second wife, at a place called Murocincta, 100 miles from Brigetio.²⁵ He was immediately summoned and upon his arrival was presented to the troops and

acclaimed as emperor on 22 November 375.²⁶

Although Ammianus gives clear reasons for these decisions, there are additional motives for the actions of the generals in Pannonia. Although only sixteen, Gratian had held his own 'court' in Gaul and already had a 'favoured circle of advisors' of his own choice ready to replace individuals whose loyalty was suspect, or who had served his father and were now deemed surplus to requirements.²⁷ In order to maintain a position of importance, the generals in Pannonia needed to create an alternative power base to Gratian, and their only choice was to nominate Valentinian as emperor, despite his age. Due to his extreme youth it was clear that Valentinian would be making no decisions himself, 'relying' on the guidance of his counsellors to help him rule.²⁸ In one respect, the recently deceased emperor had unwittingly aided their cause: shortly before his death he had nominated his son Valentinian as the consul of the West for 376.²⁹ The Eastern nominee was Valentinian's uncle, Valens. It was clear that Valentinian I believed that at some point in the future his youngest son would also accede to power, so the generals could claim that they were simply moving Valentinian's accession forward and fulfilling Valentinian I's ultimate wish.

Yet the declaration of Valentinian II as emperor marked a new phase in Roman politics. In 364, with the death of Jovian, the military commanders present had 'elected' Valentinian as emperor. This followed the tradition of military and bureaucratic officials electing emperors when the need arose. The manner of Valentinian II's promotion, with two emperors already *in situ*, demonstrated with 'unambiguous clarity the power of the emperor's generalissimos'.³⁰ The military commanders were now in a position where they could dictate the succession to the emperor. The shift in political power from the emperor to the leading military commander would reach its logical conclusion in the following century.

With the acclamation made, envoys were sent to Gratian at Trier and Valens in the East, carrying the news that Valentinian was dead and that Valentinian II had been acclaimed as emperor. They will have reached Gratian in early December 374. Gratian's reaction to the news is unclear. According to Ammianus, he accepted his half-brother's elevation in good grace.³¹ Eunapius claims that Gratian was annoyed by the fact that his father's generals had appointed his half-brother as emperor without his consent, a claim echoed by Philostorgius, who goes on to claim that shortly after Gratian punished some of those involved in the decision.³²

It is likely that Ammianus' version is nearer to the truth: Philostorgius hated Gratian 'intensely' and may have concluded that Gratian's removal of 'Pannonians' from court was a reaction against the men who had elevated his half-brother, rather than an attempt by Gratian to install his own nominees in positions of power in his new court, a conclusion echoed by Eunapius, another Eastern historian. Supporting the concept that Gratian had no ill feelings towards Valentinian II because of his elevation is that even Philostorgius had

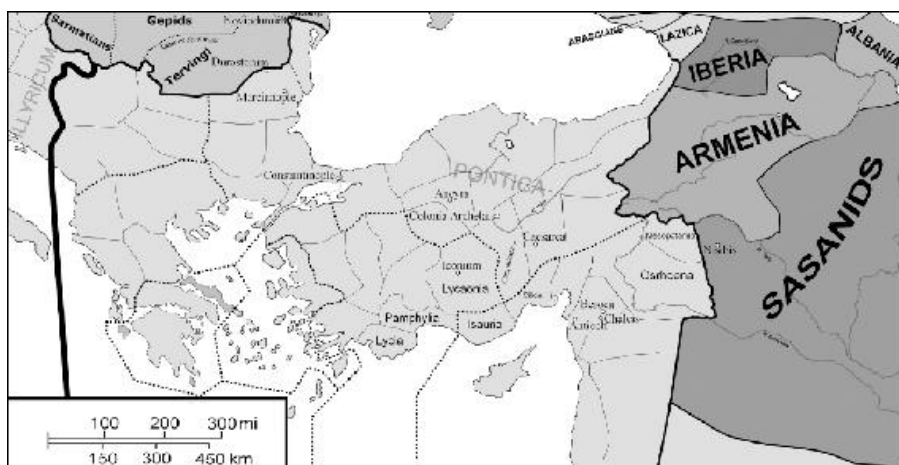
to admit that Gratian ‘discharged the duty of a father’ towards his younger half-brother.³³

It was a long way to Valens in the East, so it would only be either late December or early in the new year that Valens learned of his brother’s death. In the meantime, Valens had pressing problems of his own to deal with.

THE EAST

Isauria

With Valens’ attention firmly fixed on Shapur’s return from the war with the Kushans, and with the majority of the army stationed far to the east, the Isaurians yet again ‘rose’ against Rome, causing a large number of casualties.³⁴ The cause of the revolt is unknown, but Valens’ policy at the time was to recruit heavily in preparation for a war against Shapur, so it is possible that the Isaurians rebelled against yet another request for troops for the army. They managed to reach east as far as Lycia and north as far as central Anatolia, the latter resulting in the disruption of land communications between west and east: ‘I cannot understand how it is that no one has told you that the road to Rome is wholly impracticable in winter, the country between Constantinople and our own regions being full of enemies.’³⁵



Map 29. The East 375.

Despite the growing tensions on the eastern border, in response Valens was again forced to send a major expeditionary force under the command of Saturninus to quell the disturbances.³⁶ As with the previous ‘uprising’, the imperial troops quickly drove the Isaurians back to their mountain strongholds, but Valens was forced to deploy troops in the region to rebuild the imperial road between Colonia Archelais and Iconium, begun after November 375: they may have stayed in the region as late as 377.³⁷ With troops in Armenia, Iberia and Lazica, and Mesopotamia, as well as troops

being transferred to Illyricum, the need to deploy troops to Isauria meant that manpower shortages were becoming critical.

Armenia

The dating of the Persian–Kushan War is problematic, since it is not mentioned by Western sources and no dates are given by those Armenian sources which tell of the war. However, from analysis of events it appears that in 374 Shapur was drawing the war to a close and that in 374 or 375 a treaty was concluded with the Kushans. Therefore, by the summer of 375, Shapur had returned to face the Romans.

Obviously, Shapur had been attempting in previous years to convince Pap to switch his allegiance to Persia. These attempts had now been cut short, yet Shapur was once more in a position to wage war in Armenia if the situation demanded. Consequently, Shapur sent envoys to Valens. Shapur's demands were simple: Valens was to evacuate either Armenia or Iberia; in that way Shapur would save face and still be given time to rest and recruit for his army after its long wars in the east.³⁸ Unsurprisingly, given his strong position, Valens flatly refused the demand.³⁹

Yet Valens was not as confident as he appeared. He had probably lost a large part of his army to the West in 373 to help garrison Illyricum whilst Theodosius was campaigning against Firmus, and as yet these troops had not been returned. He had also been forced to deploy troops to quell the uprising in Isauria. With the increasing tension in the East, Valens issued new tax laws aimed at paying for the recruitment of troops to face Persia.⁴⁰ At about the same time he passed a law that allowed later Church historians to malign his reputation. He had always been against the practice of monks of renouncing the world and seeking refuge in the Church. With his religious policy of restraint falling away, and since the majority – if not all – of these monks were Nicenes, Valens finally lost patience: 'Valens made a law that monks must do military service, and ordered that any who did not want to should be beaten to death with their staves'.⁴¹ Despite Valens' apparent confidence, there was still a desperate need for recruits to the Eastern army, and he was being forced to take increasingly desperate measures to fill the short-fall.

Over the winter of 375–376 a second embassy arrived at Valens' court.⁴² This embassy demanded that the negotiators of the Treaty of Nisibis should be present at the new negotiations, implying that the original Treaty was unclear in specific areas and that clarity was now needed.⁴³ It also inferred that Valens was taking advantage of loopholes within the original Treaty in order to enhance the Roman position. Tensions between Rome and Persia were once more escalating.

The Persecutions

Although the persecutions had begun in 373, they were to peak in 375, as witnessed by Valens' attempt to enlist monks in the army as described above. Valens had finally lost patience with the Nicenes and was now determined to

force Arianism as the single Christian creed in the East.⁴⁴ For example, the Nicenes in Beroea (Aleppo) and Chalcis (Quinnesrin) were expelled and forced into exile, being replaced by Arian bishops. With the restraining hand of Valentinian removed, Valens' persecutions grew in scope. Over the winter of 375–376 Demosthenes, *vicarius* – Late Roman official – of Pontica, organized a synod at Ancyra following which Hypsinus of Parnassus was banished and Gregory of Nyssa charged with 'financial chicanery' and deposed.⁴⁵ Despite the increasing tension with Persia, Valens' actions with regard to his fellow Christians were causing internal friction to increase.

Valentinian II

As noted in the previous chapter, the attitude of Valens and Gratian towards the acclamation of Valentinian II in Pannonia is unclear when reading the ancient sources. Reading more modern sources could easily give the impression that Valentinian II's accession to the throne was a straightforward matter grudgingly approved by the two incumbent emperors. Yet a close reading of Ammianus shows that things were not quite as straightforward as is sometimes portrayed.

It would appear that, in response to the news that Valentinian had been elevated to the throne in the West, Valens had sent Themistius there to deliver a speech and carry messages. Interestingly, the speech delivered by Themistius (now known as *Oration 13*) praises Gratian by name and only mentions the existence of two emperors – Gratian in the West and Valens in the East: Valentinian II is not referred to at all. Furthermore, the speech declares that Valens and Gratian were hoping to meet in Rome in the near future to discuss events in the West.

Unhappily for Valens, events in the East would first delay and then postpone indefinitely his desire to travel to the West to consult with his nephew. Furthermore, the seriousness of these events would result in Valens being forced to accept Valentinian's elevation rather than risk a civil war: only in hindsight was acceptance of Valentinian 'inevitable'.¹ The oration clearly demonstrates that in early spring 376 Valens at least was not prepared to accept Valentinian's elevation without further consultation with Gratian. Obviously, and unfortunately, the speech does not include any references to Gratian's response to his half-brother's nomination as emperor, and as a result what decisions Gratian took in the early months of 376 with reference to Valentinian are unknown.

Yet there is one factor that is often overlooked by both ancient and modern writers. The 'Pannonian' generals who elevated Valentinian II do not appear to have insisted on Valentinian's freedom of action in his 'allocated territories'. Instead, Valentinian quickly became a 'virtual puppet' of his half-brother Gratian.² Once they had been assured of their continued place within the imperial command structure, these men served Gratian, even though Gratian allegedly only took control of Africa, Italy and Illyricum. Their service would be especially valuable during the crisis of the Gothic War. Yet

there was one further factor which will have made the majority of people unwilling to serve under Valentinian II: his mother was an Arian, and as such it may have been expected that the majority of his close supporters would also be Arian. With the army now loyal to Gratian, and with his mother's Arianism creating suspicion amongst the elite, it would be a long time before Valentinian II would be allowed to 'rule' any of the Western Empire.

Theodosius

There existed one more general who had the personality and the support that could easily result in his troops declaring him as *Augustus* in opposition to Gratian: Theodosius. Unfortunately, information concerning Theodosius is limited, and none of the sources state exactly what happened: even the dates for the little information given are contradictory. What is clear is that at some point after the elevation of Valentinian II Theodosius was arrested, taken to Carthage and beheaded.³

If it is accepted that the acceptance of Valentinian's elevation was not confirmed by Gratian, it is difficult to accept that the order for Theodosius' execution emanated from Valentinian II's new 'court': commanders in Africa will not have accepted orders from a 'usurper'. However, there is the remote possibility that, as there may have been rivalry or animosity between Theodosius on the one hand and Merobaudes and Equitius on the other, friends of the latter may have accepted a request to have Theodosius assassinated.⁴

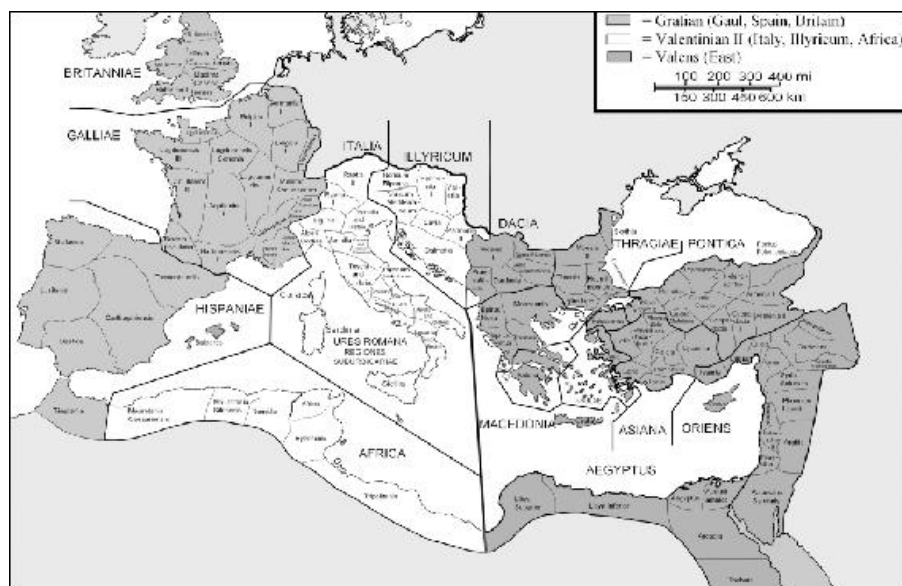
It has also been suggested that Valens was responsible for the execution.⁵ However, this claim may be based on Jerome, and it has been noted elsewhere that Jerome may be confusing the death of Theodosius with the earlier death of Theodorus, a man executed by Valens for acts of sorcery in 371/2.⁶ Although in some ways tempting, the speed of the execution combined with the slow rate of travel, plus the fact that he was the Eastern not the Western emperor, means that the claim should probably be dismissed.

In trying to unravel proceedings, events in Africa should be interpreted in the context of Valentinian's usurpation of the throne. If one group of generals could promote their nominee as emperor, it would be obvious to Gratian that another group could do the same. In this context, it is likely that as soon as news reached Gratian of events in Pannonia, he became perturbed about the possibility of Theodosius claiming the throne for himself in a similar manner. Therefore, he sent orders directly to Africa in order to forestall any attempt by the large army in Africa to declare Theodosius as emperor. Although several dates are given, it is probable that speed was the determining factor and that Jerome is correct in stating that the execution of Theodosius took place either in late 375 or more probably in early 376.⁷

Fortunately for Gratian and the West, this period of confusion and potential conflict could not have come at a better time: the Franks appear to have been quiescent; the Alamanni under Macrianus had recently signed a peace treaty

and a section of the remainder were ruled by the unnamed protégé of Valentinian I. The Quadi and Sarmatians had recently been defeated, and in addition the majority of the Roman field army was still stationed in Pannonia, ensuring that there would be no chance of attacks on the West from across the Danube.

In effect, peace reigned, and according to Zosimus the two young emperors – or more likely, given their young age, their ‘counsellors’ – divided the West following previous examples: Gratian took Gaul, Britain and Spain, whilst Valentinian took Illyricum, Africa and Italy.⁸ Closer analysis suggests that reality was a little more complex than the events portrayed by Zosimus. Although nominally only in control of half of the West, Gratian’s legal pronouncements and appointments dominated the whole of the area. It is likely that at this early date there was a battle of political wills between the court of Gratian and that of Valentinian. Although there is little evidence for events, the alleged behaviour of Merobaudes in 377 may be symbolic of the political manoeuvrings taking place in the early years of the dual-rule.⁹



Map 30. The Division of the Empire under Gratian, Valentinian II, and Valens.

The only person in the West who was undoubtedly unhappy with the course of events was Sebastianus, the *comes rei militaris* who had been dispatched from the court due to the internal politics surrounding the elevation of Valentinian II. Sebastianus was forced to watch affairs from a distance and was probably extremely angry at his treatment. He would have to wait until 378 before his talents would again be utilized, this time for Valens in the East.¹⁰

Gratian

Supporting this conclusion is the scant evidence for Gratian's next actions. He quickly removed many of his father's loyal supporters who were at court – especially those from Pannonia – from office, claiming that they were 'the liabilities of his inheritance'.¹¹ In this context Gratian's need to remove Theodosius from power was paramount.

There then began a 'rapprochement' between the emperor and the Senate, who had always been unhappy with Valentinian's imposition of 'rude provincials' to major office.¹² Since Gratian was still young, it is certain that the leader of the change in policy was Gratian's 'cultivated teacher', Ausonius.¹³ The change from 'boorish' Pannonian provincials to a well-educated cadre from Spain and Gaul may have improved relations between Gratian and the senate a little.

What helped even more was Gratian's swift change of policy regarding the appointment of the *praefecti urbi* (prefects of the city of Rome). These were now to be changed on a regular basis and their members were to be mainly from Rome itself. The result was that a group of pro-Gratian senators was quickly formed from those who had received appointments. Furthermore, a new law was quickly passed that ensured that senators would now be tried in front of the emperor rather than at the hands of his subordinates.¹⁴ This was in direct contrast to Valentinian's practice of having senators tried by loyal members of his entourage, as had happened in the 'sorcery' trials of earlier years. Both of these measures would ensure that in the early years of his rule as the West's senior emperor Gratian could rely on support from the Senate, a support he encouraged in the following year when he affirmed that senators could not be tortured during their trials.¹⁵

In the early years of his domination Gratian also appears to have followed his father's policy of toleration with regard to religion.¹⁶ However, as time passed he was to encourage the growth of Christianity in the pagan stronghold that was the city of Rome.¹⁷ This would bring him into opposition with Symmachus, one of the 'greatest' men of his day, but this was in the future.

Understandably, Gratian gave one more order as soon as he felt secure on the throne. Probably early in the year, or less likely late in 375, Gratian recalled his mother, Severa, who had been exiled by Valentinian I in 369.

THE EAST

It is possible to assume that the death of Valentinian and the assumption of the role of senior emperor would have an effect on Valens' actions, especially with regards to imposing his will on his nephew Gratian in the West. The assumption would be mistaken. Firstly, Valens had far too many problems of his own to deal with and would not have welcomed any additional responsibilities for the West in 376. The main problem remained Shapur and the situation in Armenia.

Secondly, the imperial officials in the West had no intention of consulting

Valens regarding the succession to Valentinian: after all, Gratian was already emperor in his own right, having been proclaimed *Augustus* on 4 August 367:¹⁸ nothing that Valens could say or do would alter that fact, and Gratian's apparent acceptance of the boy Valentinian as co-emperor was also something that Valens could do little to alter. Consequently, Valens' attention remained firmly on the East.

Armenia

In response to Shapur's proposal that either Armenia be divided or the Romans evacuate Iberia, Valens sent Victor, *magister equitum*, and Urbicius, *Dux Mesopotamiae* (Commander in Mesopotamia), with an ultimatum to Shapur. Aware that Shapur had fought a long war with the Kushans and needed time to replace his losses, and hoping that his own weakness was unknown to Shapur, Valens entered into a game of bluff. Consequently, the envoys delivered an ultimatum: it was wrong for Shapur to covet Armenia, which had the right to choose for itself. Instead, Persia was to evacuate Iberia or face war.¹⁹

In the meantime, Valens was busy recruiting troops to fill the gaps in his army caused by the deployment of a large number of Eastern troops to Thrace in 372.²⁰ Unfortunately this would take time and cause a large amount of resentment amongst his subjects. The most powerful and wealthy members of the Eastern senate will doubtless have been aware of the reason for the shortage of troops and they may even have been pressing for the return of the troops from the West, although there is no record of these events. Over spring and early summer the tension mounted and Valens continued his attempts to bring the army up to strength. Events on the Danube frontier now changed the political situation in the East for ever.

It is sometimes claimed that Valens' increasingly 'hard-line' stance with the Persians had one more spur: it has been suggested that Valens had by this time been informed of events on the Danube and was further emboldened by the news that the army might soon be being reinforced by large numbers of Gothic troops.²¹ Although this remains a possibility, the chronology is unclear. The date of the Gothic appeal – and more specifically of when this reached Valens far in the east – is unknown, as is the date when Valens sent the embassy to Shapur. Given the chronological problems, it is safer to assume that Valens was unaware of events on the Danube when he sent Victor and Urbicius on their embassy: there is no mention by Ammianus that Valens was aware of the Gothic request prior to the embassy being sent.²² It is more likely that Valens knew that Shapur had suffered losses in his war with the Kushans and would be reluctant to fight another war against Rome so soon after the previous conflict; in reality, Valens had entered into a game of political brinksmanship with Shapur.

The Tervingi

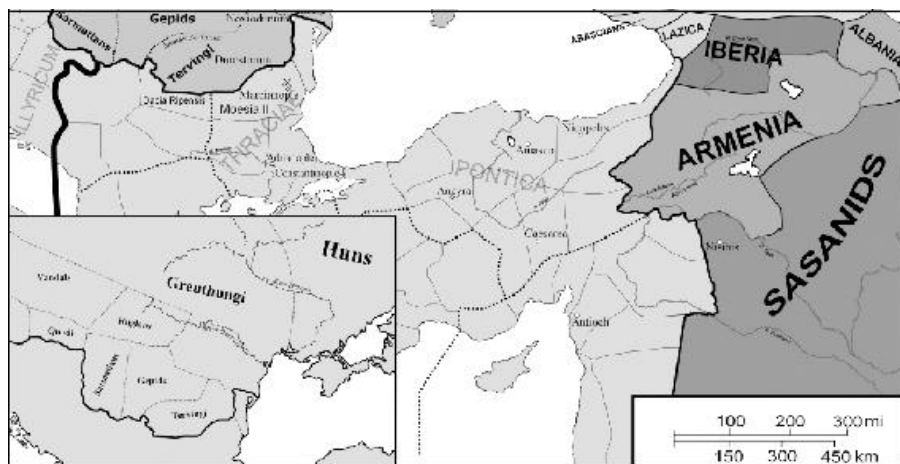
As seen in Chapter 4, at an unknown date, but probably in 372, the Tervingi

had begun a major civil war.²³ A leader called Fritigern appears to have rebelled against Athanaric's leadership, and especially against Athanaric's attempt to eradicate Christianity from *Gothia*: it is likely that Fritigern was at this time a Catholic Christian following the Nicene Creed.²⁴ However, Athanaric remained the most powerful military commander amongst the Tervingi and defeated Fritigern. In desperation, Fritigern asked for and received help from Valens, who ordered the commander of the troops in Thrace to lead his forces to Fritigern's assistance.²⁵ It should be noted, however, that the scale of assistance offered by Valens demonstrates that he was not helping Fritigern to win the civil war, but simply helping him to avoid defeat.²⁶ With survival assured, Fritigern 'in proof of his fidelity to the Romans ... embraced the religion of the emperor, and persuaded the barbarians over whom he ruled to follow his example'.²⁷ It is at this point that Fritigern and his followers converted from followers of the Nicene tradition to Arianism. The conversion would have drastic repercussions through the following century.

Events in *Gothia* now become extremely complicated, a factor not helped by the poor descriptions in the sources. Yet although certainty is impossible, a reasonable chronology can be proposed that would fit with what little is known. It is assumed by most historians that the Tervingian civil war began in 372. Assuming that the two sides had to group their forces before committing to battle, it is likely that the first battle, a victory for Athanaric, was fought late in the campaign season of 372. If true, this means that Fritigern's appeal to Valens may have occurred over the winter of 372–373.

Consequently, Fritigern's victory over Athanaric can probably be dated to 373. Yet as has already been demonstrated, what little evidence remains points to Athanaric being a more-than-competent general who was capable of withdrawing his forces intact after a defeat and so avoiding catastrophic losses, since these usually occurred in the pursuit.²⁸ Therefore it is reasonable to assume that Athanaric would have been capable of continuing the civil war.

It was probably shortly after Fritigern's victory that a major new threat to the Goths emerged. With the war expected to continue into 374, news came of a new external crisis in the east. The dating of the arrival of the Huns is problematic, since as usual the sources are poor and no dates are given, and so events have to be deduced, largely from the account given by Ammianus.²⁹ At an unknown date in the early 370s the Huns arrived on the north-eastern borders of the Greuthungi and quickly put them under huge military pressure. The Greuthungian King, Ermenaric, resisted the Huns 'for a long time', but he was defeated and committed suicide.³⁰ After his death his successor Vithimer died 'only after many ... defeats'.³¹ Interestingly, Ammianus notes that Vithimer was able to hire Hunnic mercenaries to fight against their fellow Huns: the description of the Huns as an 'unstoppable horde' appears to be mistaken.³²



Map 31. The East 376.

Vithimer was killed in battle and was succeeded by his son Vitheric. As Vitheric was still a minor, Alatheus and Saphrax were appointed as regents to lead the Greuthungi.³³ They decided to head west with the majority of their people, retreating to the Dniester.³⁴ This happened almost certainly at the latest in 374.

The historians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries depicted the Huns almost as a force of nature, unstoppable and bent upon the destruction of civilization. More recent analysis has noted the implication in Ammianus that the war between the Greuthungi and the Huns may have lasted for several years, probably beginning whilst the Tervingi were embroiled in their civil war. Furthermore, it is clear that the Huns were not at this point united, consisting simply of large groups of tribes who sometimes worked together for a short period of time to achieve a common goal. The appearance of a tribe of Huns fighting alongside the Greuthungi against the other Huns illustrates how disunited the Huns actually were at this early stage. It would take a leader of some brilliance to unite the Huns, and this would not happen until the next century.

With the Greuthungi arriving on their borders, the Tervingi took counsel and quickly reached an agreement that halted the civil war. Although he had been defeated by Fritigern, Athanaric remained the leader of the majority of the Tervingi and so took charge during the crisis.³⁵ Athanaric gathered the Tervingian forces and led the army to the banks of the Dniester. Fortifying his position, he sent a small force ahead to reconnoitre the situation.³⁶ Although certainty is impossible, it is reasonable to assume that the danger from the Huns was underestimated and that Fritigern and his followers did not join Athanaric for the campaign.

Athanaric's plan backfired: the Huns realized that the small Tervingian force that had been sent out were simply scouts and assumed that a larger army lay somewhere to its rear. Marching by night, they bypassed the

scouting force and attacked the main Tervingian army unexpectedly, putting it to flight, although – true to form – Athanaric appears to have been able to extricate the majority of his forces from the defeat.³⁷

Athanaric retreated to the mountains and prepared a new defensive position, but to no avail. The Huns quickly advanced and again defeated the Gothic army, Athanaric only being saved because the Huns were impeded in their pursuit by the mass of booty they had taken.³⁸

Between 367 and 375 the Tervingi had fought Valens, a civil war and now the Huns. In 369 they had been forced to accept Valens' peace terms due to their poor economic and military position. In the ensuing six years their position had only worsened, and the Tervingi were now 'worn out by lack of the necessities of life'.³⁹

The Tervingi Ask Valens for Asylum

Battered by the Huns and ravaged by the civil war, Tervingian society collapsed.⁴⁰ Unnerved by the ferocity of the Huns, the majority of the Tervingi decided to follow Fritigern and his colleague Alavivus when they proposed to ask Valens for sanctuary within the Empire. Given that Fritigern had a 'special relationship' with Valens, this would certainly have appealed to the Tervingi as a viable option.⁴¹ The two leaders now led their people – according to Eunapius almost 200,000 in number, although modern estimates suggest around 90,000⁴² – towards the Danube, ready to petition Valens for help.⁴³

Since Fritigern was obviously the most suitable individual when it came to dealing with Valens, it seems a little strange that Alavivus was the senior of the two leaders.⁴⁴ It is possible that the majority of the Tervingi remained pagan and so refused to accept the Christian Fritigern as their main leader, although they were willing to accept his mediation in the negotiations with Valens.

The remainder of the Tervingi continued to follow Athanaric. Athanaric now faced a dilemma: in the peace negotiations of 369–370 he had claimed that he had taken an oath not to set foot on Roman soil.⁴⁵ If he now petitioned the emperor for entry to the empire he would both look foolish to his own people and might also anger Valens, who would now know that the claim of an oath was almost certainly a lie. As a result, Athanaric led his remnant of the Goths to a place near the Danube and waited on events.⁴⁶

In late summer or early autumn the Tervingi arrived at the Danube.⁴⁷ Although uncorroborated by other sources, Sozomen's claim that Ulfilas, the Gothic bishop, agreed to act as emissary for the Goths to the emperor Valens is reasonable and likely.⁴⁸ Although possibly a Nicene, whereas Valens was an Arian, Ulfilas was an important individual with a high reputation amongst the Goths, and he had stayed true to his Christian faith during the first persecution in the mid 340s. Accordingly, his piety and strength of character would give him a political stature that would enhance his role as an

ambassador. Furthermore, it is clear that Ulfilas retained connections within *Gothia*, and it is likely that despite the persecutions the Christian Goths who had been expelled during the earlier persecution and had settled in Moesia II continued to send missionaries into Tervingian territory.⁴⁹

The Tervingi now sent the embassy across the Danube, and ‘begged with prayers and protestations’ that ‘an exiled race’ be allowed to settle inside the empire in Thrace.⁵⁰ Unfortunately for the Tervingi, the emperor was at that time residing in Antioch, so the embassy had a long way to travel before they could deliver their message. Finally, probably in early autumn, the embassy arrived at court and delivered the appeal to Valens. In the meantime, the Tervingi were forced by the Roman border officials and their supporting troops to remain on the far bank of the Danube.

When the envoys arrived at Antioch Valens and his *consistorium* (advisors) held long and argumentative debates as to what course of action to follow.⁵¹ They had numerous examples from earlier in time which would help them in their deliberations. No doubt the most influential case in point had occurred fewer than twenty years earlier, much to the benefit of the empire. In 359 the Sarmatian Limigantes had petitioned Constantius II to be allowed to enter the empire.⁵² Although the details of the agreement have been lost, the events of 359 suggest that the Limigantes were settled as *dediticii* (‘submission’/‘unconditional surrender’⁵³) as they were disarmed, accepted into the empire with *coloni* (‘tenant farmer’) status, were settled in areas determined by the emperor, and were subject to unlimited recruitment for the army.

Apart from these considerations, there appear to have been two overriding factors that swayed Valens towards allowing the Tervingi to enter the empire. The first was that the Goths had already stated their willingness to allow unconditional recruiting to the Roman army.⁵⁴ The other members of the *consistorium* who were for accepting the Tervingi into the Empire ‘praised the good fortune of [Valens], which unexpectedly brought him so many young recruits’.⁵⁵ Although Ammianus denounces these individuals as ‘experienced flatterers’, it should be noted that Ammianus in his writings was heavily biased against Valens, and his tone is further influenced by hindsight, since he knew what effect the decision was to have on the immediate future of the empire.⁵⁶

This was the most important factor in the decision: allowing the Tervingi into the Empire would be of great benefit to Valens: already suffering from a troop shortage, Gothic recruits would help to bring the Eastern army back up to strength. Furthermore, instead of levying troops from within the empire Valens could commute the levy into a cash payment, further helping in the restoration of the Empire’s financial condition.

Possibly of almost equal importance was the fact that Valens and Fritigern had a pre-existing ‘special relationship’ based on Valens helping Fritigern in the latter’s hour of need, although the claim that Fritigern was a *foederatus*

(‘federate’) may be going too far.⁵⁷ Fritigern’s subsequent conversion to Arianism would undoubtedly be interpreted by Valens as a sign that Fritigern was trustworthy. As a consequence, Valens would be unworried by advisors claiming that the Tervingi were a major threat and should not be allowed to cross the Danube. Unfortunately, there were a very large number of Tervingi wanting to enter the empire, many of whom were pagan, and to ensure their compliance Valens ordered that before they were allowed to cross the Danube they all had to convert to Christianity. Obviously, given earlier events and his on-going persecution of Nicenes, this was to be conversion to Valens’ Arian form of Christianity.

The bold request by the Tervingi that they be settled in Thrace can be interpreted as presumptuous, but it should be noted that this is where their fellow Tervingi, the Christians expelled by the first persecution, had been settled. Furthermore, this is where trans-Danubian barbarians had previously been settled, sometimes in very large numbers.⁵⁸ Precedent was on their side. Although there were obvious disadvantages to allowing the Tervingi to settle in Thrace, these were clearly outweighed by the advantages.⁵⁹

The Decision

At some time in autumn Valens’ answer arrived on the Danube: the Tervingian ‘princes’ were friendly and the Tervingi would all be allowed to cross, on condition that they all converted to Arianism.⁶⁰ In return for long-term military service, the Tervingi would be allowed to settle in *Moesia Thraciam* and *Dacia Ripensis*, and would be guaranteed logistical support both during the course of their migration and in the transitional period before they became self-sufficient, growing their own food.⁶¹

Unfortunately, these are the only clear details of the agreement which survive, and to make matters worse there is a major contradiction in the ancient sources, which cannot be reconciled. Orosius states that the Tervingi were allowed to cross the Danube without having to give up their weapons to the Roman officials.⁶² On the other hand, Eunapius and Zosimus both claim that Valens’ orders were that the Tervingi were to be disarmed prior to being ferried across the Danube into Thrace.⁶³ Eunapius notes that it was the corruption and greed of the local officials that resulted in the Tervingi being able to hide their weapons and cross the Danube without problem.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, it is unclear whether Eunapius, and later Zosimus, are stating Valens’ orders or whether the two authors accepted as fact the findings of an inquiry into the mismanagement of the crossing that effectively laid the blame on local commanders, and so removed the blame from Valens.

Interestingly, Ammianus makes no mention of an order that the Goths disarm, instead noting that they remained armed once across the river.⁶⁵ Given his castigation of the local officers, it is likely that, if the order had been given, Ammianus would have used such information to further condemn the officials.

In addition, it is usually assumed that Valens made a mistake when he admitted the majority of the Tervingi into the Empire. Yet it is clear from later events that the intelligence sent to Valens by local Roman administrators had vastly underestimated the number of Tervingi waiting on the Danube for permission to enter the Empire.⁶⁶ According to Ammianus, local officials gave up their attempts to count the barbarian tribesmen.⁶⁷ Therefore, it is likely that Valens believed that only the followers of Fritigern were present, rather than the majority of the Tervingi. If Valens believed that only a fraction of the Tervingi were ready to enter the empire, there was no need to take action to remove them as a threat, since the local troops could easily overcome any resistance.

Finally, it is clear that Valens made an immediate demand of the Tervingi as they crossed the Danube: the Tervingi instantly provided recruits which were enrolled in the army and sent to the east and employed to garrison some of the eastern cities.⁶⁸ Attempts to disarm the Tervingi would have caused resistance amongst the recruits, who would not have been willing to travel away from their families leaving them without the means to defend themselves, and such resistance is nowhere attested.

As a consequence, although it impossible to relate with certainty, it is probably safer to assume that no order was given to disarm the Tervingi: after all, they were friendly and had already agreed to supply troops to the Roman army. This was not the action of a tribe preparing to fight the Romans at the first opportunity.

Some historians have accepted that the order to disarm the Tervingi was given, and have deduced that the Tervingi were allowed to enter the empire as *dediticii*, following the example set by Constantius' settlement of the Limigantes mentioned above.⁶⁹ This assumption, based on previous practice, appears to be mistaken, especially as settling the Tervingi as *dediticii* carries a series of further assumptions which are not attested anywhere in the sources. The agreement merely granted land on which the Tervingi could settle in return for supplying recruits, nothing more.

As the Tervingi crossed the Danube Valens, now expecting there to be a large number of fresh Gothic recruits ready to take their place in the Roman army, commuted the conscription that had been announced into the *aurum tironicum* ('Cash for Recruits'): with enough recruits to bring the army up to full strength, Valens could now concentrate on gathering the money needed to finance his projected campaign in the east.⁷⁰

The Tervingi Enter the Empire

Valens had ordered officials to supervise the crossing of the Tervingi, but it quickly became obvious that the number of tribesmen attempting to cross the Danube was greater than expected. Using the boats supplied by the empire, as well as rafts and hollowed tree trunks, the Tervingi slowly crossed the river. Unfortunately for the tribesmen, as in 368 the Danube was in flood and many

– especially those who tried to swim across the river – drowned.⁷¹

As more and more immigrants crossed the Danube it soon became clear that Lupicinus (see below) didn't have enough troops to control the Tervingi and that the Roman logistic capabilities in the Balkans were unable to cope.⁷² The Tervingi were 'spreading over a great extent of plain and filling all regions and every mountain height'.⁷³

Although Valens had given orders that 'they be given food for their present needs and fields to cultivate', the number of Tervingi who had crossed exceeded his expectations and the situation quickly began to deteriorate.⁷⁴ The Tervingi themselves will have had few supplies left: what they had carried with them in their journey to the Danube will probably have been consumed during their two-month wait for a reply from Valens in Antioch. By comparison, in 363 Julian had led his army east to invade Persia. Stopping at Antioch, the presence of the army had helped create famine in the city.⁷⁵ In a similar fashion, the presence of a large number of Tervingi now stretched the logistical framework in the area past its breaking point. With winter looming, the Tervingi began to suffer from the effects of famine.

Valens was counting on recruits from the Tervingi to bring the Roman army up to strength. However, almost certainly against his orders, the local commanders – Lupicinus, *comes rei militaris* ('military count') in Thrace, and Maximus, either *dux Scythiae* (Duke of Scythia) or *dux Moesiae* (Duke of Moesia) – decided to use the situation to their own advantage, making huge profits at the expense of the Goths.⁷⁶ According to Ammianus, the two generals 'exchanged every dog that their insatiability could gather from far and wide for one slave each, and among these were carried off also sons of the chieftains', whereas Jerome only blames one of the two, claiming that the Tervingi 'were driven by hunger to have to rebel because of the greed of general Maximus'.⁷⁷

Again according to Ammianus, determined to make the most of their opportunity Lupicinus and Maximus delayed the dispersion of the Tervingi across Thrace.⁷⁸ This might be true, but the delay may also have been caused by the sheer numbers of the Tervingi. Aware that his forces were in danger of being overwhelmed, and unwilling to allow the Goths free access to the province, since in their piteous state it was likely that they would seize food and other supplies from any unprotected settlements, Lupicinus ordered all of the troops in the area to mass together to supervise the movement of the Tervingi to Marcianople.⁷⁹ As he waited for the reinforcements, the Tervingi began to lose their faith in the Roman promise to supply them with food.

The Greuthungi

Shortly after the entry into the empire of Alavivus and Fritigern with the Tervingi at least two other groups of refugees, this time Greuthungi, arrived on the Danube seeking safety.⁸⁰ One was nominally under the rule of Vitheric, but was actually led by Alatheus and Saphrax.⁸¹ At a different location on the

Danube another band of Greuthungi, led by a man named Farnobius, also attempted to enter the empire.⁸² Having accepted the Tervingi, Valens was aware that he did not have the manpower or the logistics in the region to supervise yet more refugees. As a result, all of the other petitions were refused.⁸³

Once aware of these refusals, Athanaric, who had remained near to the Danube waiting on events, left without asking Valens for help as he expected a similar rejection. He withdrew to a place named by Ammianus as ‘Caucalanda’, drove out the resident Sarmatians, and settled there with his people.⁸⁴

For the Greuthungi, events would take a very different course. Not long after Valens’ refusal had arrived the Greuthungi became aware that the Roman troops guarding the Danube had been withdrawn to supervise the movement of the Tervingi: ‘the boats that usually went up and down the river and prevented them from crossing were inactive’.⁸⁵ Taking their opportunity, the Greuthungi crossed the Danube and ‘pitched their camp a long distance from Fritigern’.⁸⁶

Marcianople

With the arrival of reinforcements, and unaware of the fact that the Greuthungi had crossed the Danube, Lupicinus ordered his men to escort the Tervingi to the city of Marcianopolis. Ammianus claims that Fritigern attempted to slow the march to the new camp site in order to retain contact with the Greuthungi.⁸⁷ Although tempting, it is hard to believe that Ammianus had intimate details of Fritigern’s strategy during this period, or that messengers would easily pass through the cordon of Roman troops supervising the Tervingi. It is more likely that Fritigern was moving slowly because of the large number of families present – the presence of children and the old would tend to result in a very slow movement rate – and also because of the lack of supplies, as an undernourished population would of necessity not be able to march at high speed. It is almost certain that Ammianus was attempting to establish that Fritigern was wary of Roman motives and was taking care to keep as many of his options open as possible. At the same time, Ammianus was laying the foundation for the later identification of Fritigern as a man steeped in deviousness and diabolical intrigue.

Arriving outside Marcianopolis, the Tervingi set up their camp. Lupicinus retreated to the safety of the city, where he established his headquarters. Aware of the distrust and apprehension felt by the Tervingi, it is most likely at around this time that Lupicinus became aware that the Greuthungi had forced a crossing of the Danube. Alarmed, he invited Fritigern and Alavivus to a banquet, possibly with the hope of allaying their fears and regaining their trust.⁸⁸

At this point the Tervingi expected to be given access to the stores held within the city. Instead, as the two Gothic leaders entered the city, Lupicinus

gave orders that the troops should be deployed to block all access to Marcianople. At this the Tervingi pleaded that they be allowed entry in order to obtain the food they so desperately lacked, and a great argument between the tribesmen and citizens began.⁸⁹

The Tervingi now began to think that the reason for their exclusion from the city was in order that Lupicinus could remove their leaders and the accompanying guard of honour. The theory quickly spread and the affray escalated into violence, the Tervingi killing and despoiling a 'great troop of [Roman] soldiers'.⁹⁰ Secret messages were sent to Lupicinus to warn him of the conflict. Aware that the Greuthungi were at loose in the area, and now terrified that the Tervingi would join them, Lupicinus panicked: he ordered that the Gothic attendants of the two kings, who were waiting outside Lupicinus' quarters, were to be put to death and the kings held as hostages.⁹¹ Upon hearing the news, the number of Tervingi who were fighting increased. However, Fritigern convinced Lupicinus that he should be released in order to quell the fears of his tribesmen and so calm their anger. He was allowed to leave the city and, received with joy by the tribesmen outside the city walls, he was spirited away to the safety of the Gothic camp and the Gothic attacks ceased.⁹²

Although Fritigern had vowed to quieten his people, he failed to fulfil his promise. The murder of the honour guard was the last straw for the Goths. Incensed, they sent out 'predatory bands' to pillage the surrounding countryside, no doubt with the main purpose of getting the supplies that they so desperately needed.⁹³

The Battle of Marcianopolis

With the Goths beginning to disperse, either late in 376 or early in 377 Lupicinus left the safety of the city walls and sent orders for all of the available troops to muster away from the city prior to attacking the rebellious Tervingi.⁹⁴ He set up his camp nine miles from Marcianopolis. Unwilling to wait for his onslaught, the Tervingi also gathered their forces and launched a ferocious attack on the Roman lines. The description of the battle given by Ammianus is limited: 'The barbarians rushed recklessly on crowds of our men, dashed their shields upon opponents' bodies, and with lance and sword ran through those who opposed them.'⁹⁵ This implies that the Tervingi managed to close with the Roman forces, crushing the Romans into a tightly compressed mass where the Roman forces were unable to use their weapons effectively. Despite the skill of the Roman troops, the majority were overrun and butchered where they stood. The Roman forces lost most of their men and their unit standards in the battle.

After their victory the Tervingi stripped the Roman dead of their arms and armour and began to plunder ever more widely, since there were now no enemy forces to threaten them. Lupicinus, however, escaped and fled back to the safety of Marcianopolis. From here he sent messengers to Valens at

Antioch to inform the emperor that the Goths had rebelled and defeated the provincial troops.⁹⁶ Unaware of the defeat, and of the crossing of the Greuthungi on to Roman soil, Valens had remained focused upon events in the east.

The Rebellion Spreads

With the main Roman forces in the Balkans defeated and the remainder refusing to fight the Tervingi, the rebels had complete freedom of action. Although the circumstances are unclear, it is most likely shortly after the revolt that the majority of the Greuthungi who had crossed the Danube joined with the majority of the Tervingi under Fritigern.⁹⁷ Saphrax and Alatheus, acting as regents for the young Vitheric, would have felt that the proposal was too good an opportunity to miss. The Greuthungi were invaders who had not been given permission to enter the Empire. On the other hand, although Fritigern had been given permission, he was now in open revolt. Expecting to be at war with Rome, an alliance of the two peoples was a sensible decision.

Although it is probable that all of the Greuthungi who had crossed the Danube joined the alliance – after all, they were led by Vitheric, their ‘hereditary King’ – the surviving evidence implies that not all of the Tervingi were as willing to follow Fritigern. The low numbers attested at the later Battle of Adrianople, plus the existence of other wandering groups of Tervingi, suggests that at least some of the Tervingi were unwilling to follow the Christian and ‘pro-Roman’ Fritigern. In fact, it is possible that the removal of Alavivus and the escape of Fritigern from Marcianople were viewed with suspicion by many tribesmen, wondering whether Fritigern had managed to remove their preferred leader with Roman help. Whatever the cause, it is clear that the Tervingi were not united, even though they were at war with Rome.

It is with the union of the Tervingi and the Greuthungi that Ammianus stops speaking of the two separate tribes. From about this point onwards Ammianus calls the combined force ‘the Goths’. When speaking of tribes outside this confederation, he tends to use the word ‘barbarian/s’. Although possibly simplistic – as will be shown below – the terminology will be used from this point in this narrative.

The Siege of Adrianople

Shortly after the Battle of Marcianopolis orders arrived at Adrianople that two units of ‘Gothic’ troops serving in the Roman army and wintering outside the city were to cross to the province of Hellespontus in Asia Minor.⁹⁸ It is not clear whether these units had recently been recruited or had been in the army for a long time: arguments for both hypotheses are valid.

Due to the distances involved, it is unlikely that the decision was made after news of the Battle of Marcianopolis had been taken to Valens. Instead, it is more likely that the orders simply represent one aspect of Valens’ redeployment of troops in preparation for war against Persia.

The two commanders of the Gothic units, Sueridus and Colias, had watched

dispassionately as their countrymen had revolted in the north, an act which emphasizes the lack of 'Gothic' unity.⁹⁹ When the orders arrived they approached the city council and politely asked for a two-day postponement, plus the customary food and money for their journey. In response, the *duumvir* (chief magistrate) of the city council issued a blank refusal, insisting that they leave immediately and without supplies. Although according to the strict designation of responsibility it was not within the remit of the *duumvir* to decide on these matters, it is likely that the responsible official was still in the north, where he had been overseeing the immigration of the Tervingi. The *duumvir* made matters worse by enlisting many citizens and the workers at the imperial munitions factory to enforce his decision.¹⁰⁰

Perplexed by this turn of events, Sueridus and Colias stood dumbfounded, until the abuse shouted by the citizens began to be accompanied by missiles. At this point the Gothic troops' patience gave way and they attacked their tormentors. Many citizens were killed and Sueridus and Colias found themselves in open rebellion against the empire.¹⁰¹

Interestingly, one aspect of the revolt at Adrianople that usually remains overlooked is the conduct of the Goths immediately after their 'rebellion'. Debate rages over whether the 'barbarian' troops who entered Roman service were armed and equipped by the state or whether they used only the weapons and equipment that they brought with them. Although in other cases they may have been supplied by imperial factories, the fact that the troops of Sueridus and Colias were reduced to 'plundering the dead bodies and arming themselves in the Roman equipment' demonstrates either that this was not always the case or that it took a long time to equip new recruits.¹⁰²

At the same time, Fritigern and his forces arrived outside the city. They had obviously taken advantage of their victory to travel 250 kilometres to the south in search of food: the area around Marcianopolis will by this time have been completely denuded of supplies.¹⁰³ Sueridus and Colias joined Fritigern, and, reinforced by 'regular' troops, Fritigern laid siege to Adrianople in the hope of taking the city and securing a large surplus of supplies and booty.¹⁰⁴

Despite his hopes, the defence of the city proved to be effective, and after the Goths had made several failed attempts to storm the walls Fritigern changed his mind. Telling his men that 'he kept peace with walls', Fritigern 'left a sufficient force there [to maintain the siege] and persuaded the rest to go away ... and ... attack and devastate the rich and fruitful parts of the country, which were still without protectors and could be pillaged without any danger'.¹⁰⁵ Although often overlooked, Fritigern was confident enough in his troops to both maintain the siege and disperse the rest in the continual search for supplies.

The majority of the Goths now spread over Thrace: the suggestion made by Zosimus that at around this time the Goths laid siege to Constantinople is undoubtedly wrong, probably because Zosimus confused these events with the later attack described by Ammianus.¹⁰⁶ The Goths were helped by the fact that

they had many prisoners and that they were being joined by increasing numbers of Goths who had been taken as slaves, as well as by large numbers of peasants and goldminers unhappy with the high level of taxation in the empire. These new recruits immediately began to pay the Goths back for their acceptance, pointing out the 'secret refuges' and 'hiding-places of the inhabitants', 'hidden stores of grain', those villages which were rich, and 'especially those in which it was said that abundant supplies of food were to be found'.¹⁰⁷ The spread of the rebellion over the winter of 376–377 put ever more pressure on the limited number of loyal troops in the area, and it quickly became apparent to local military commanders that a major campaign would be needed to crush the Goths and restore Thrace to imperial rule. Messengers were sent to Valens at Antioch bearing news of the deteriorating state of affairs in the Balkans, and in the meantime the barbarians plundered the rich valleys of the River Maritsa and other nearby smaller waterways.

Persia

Even before these messengers arrived events in the East took a downward turn for Valens. Earlier, he had sent two emissaries to negotiate with Shapur. There now follows a conflict between the two main sources. According to Ammianus, on their return journey the two envoys made an error and accepted the submission of 'some small territories' in Armenia, possibly Asthianene and Belabitene.¹⁰⁸ According to P'awstos, this is not the correct sequence of events. He claims that the Armenians had requested that two forts be built in every canton in Armenia as permanent garrison centres, and that Rome should help with the costs of the Armenian army.¹⁰⁹ If this version is correct, it is possible that the Armenians had not offered two districts to the Romans, but had asked instead that they be garrisoned by Roman troops.¹¹⁰ It would appear that P'awstos is more accurate with regard to events within Armenia, but that Ammianus is correct in suggesting that the offer worsened relations between Shapur and Valens, since Shapur was acutely aware that Valens was slowly overturning all of the provisions of the Treaty of 363.

In response in autumn 376 an embassy led by the Suren himself was sent by Shapur. This offered to the emperor these same lands in Armenia that had been offered for garrison by the Armenians. By this time Valens was almost certainly aware that a large number of Goths had reached the Danube and asked for sanctuary within the Empire, further promising to supply troops for the Roman army if this was needed.¹¹¹ Confident that his armies, reinforced by the Goths, could defeat Persia in war, Valens courteously refused the offer and began preparations for a 'tripartite invasion of Persia in 377'.¹¹² Aware that Rome was preparing for war, Shapur ordered a muster of his troops and told the Suren to prepare for a campaign in the following year in Armenia and Iberia, according to Ammianus specifically against Asthianene and Belabitene.¹¹³ War seemed inevitable.

The Persecutions

Following his dismissal of Hypsinus of Parnassus and Gregory of Nyssa (see the previous chapter), Demosthenes, *vicar* of Pontica, travelled to court to consult with Valens before returning to both Caesarea and Armenian Sebaste and ordering ‘the Nicene priests of curial descent to be defrocked and returned to their curiae’.¹¹⁴ From there he ordered action to be taken against Nicenes in Doara and Nicopolis (Susheri).¹¹⁵ Possibly at this time the Bishop of Amaseia (Amasya) was expelled and replaced by an Arian.¹¹⁶ However, despite these changes the local populations continued in their support for their ‘traditional’ bishop. Although in some cases these had always been Arian, in those where Valens had caused the bishops to be expelled, the local population felt no compulsion to support the imposed Arian bishops. Later, when the Arian bishops were in turn expelled, the returning Nicenes found their loyal supporters awaiting them. Although early in his reign Valens appeared to have recognized this, once Valentinian had died, and under pressure from Eudoxius and Euzoius, Valens lost patience with the Nicenes and his anger caused him to lose his earlier understanding.¹¹⁷ It was only the events in Thrace that were to halt Valens’ attempt to convert the East to Arianism.

Chapter 15

Crisis in the East

THE EAST

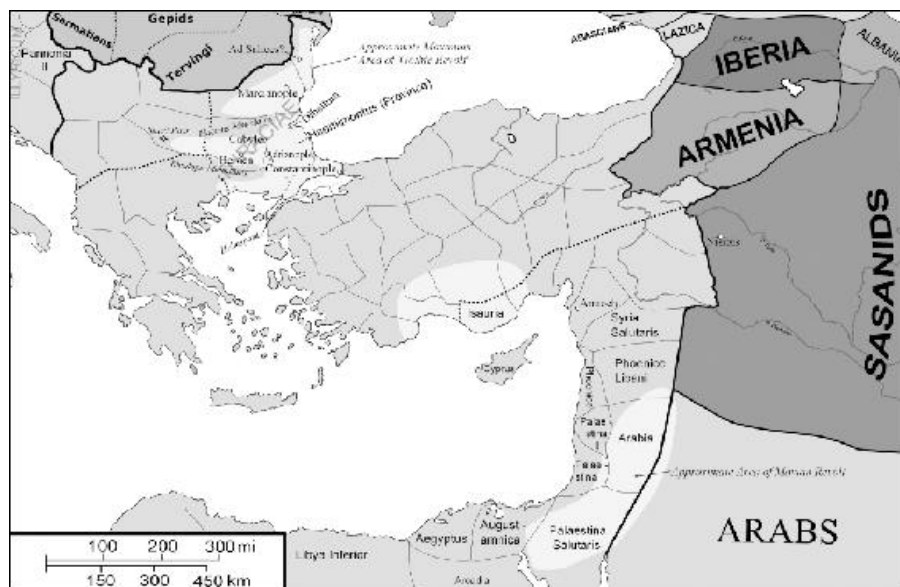
Unaware of events in the Balkans, Valens continued his preparations for war with Persia in Armenia.¹ He was busy ‘raising mercenaries’, especially from amongst the Goths, when the whole position changed.² Either late in 376, but more likely in early spring 377, messengers arrived in Antioch bearing the news of the ‘Gothic rebellion’.³ The news left Valens with a dilemma: he had relied on the Gothic recruits to fill the ranks in the Eastern army. Now he was faced with the prospect of having to fight a war on two fronts with a shortage of manpower.⁴

As with revolt of Procopius, Valens’ first instinct was to send troops to quell the rebellion whilst he remained in the East facing the Persians. He withdrew troops from Armenia, placed them under the command of Traianus, the *magister peditum*, and Profuturus, probably a *comes rei militaris*, and sent them west to face the Goths.⁵ Yet on this occasion he made one major change from his earlier policy: he immediately sent messengers to Gratian in the West to ask for aid in Thrace.⁶ It is almost certain that the messengers travelled by sea, since the land routes across Thrace to the Julian Alps were soon blocked by the marauding Goths.⁷

Probably at some time in mid 377 Gratian received the envoys from Valens asking for help against the Goths. Opinion in the West appears to have been divided, with some of Gratian’s advisors believing that the rebellion was a purely Eastern problem and that Gratian needed to focus on the defence of the West – hence the confusion in the ancient sources, with some believing that Gratian was unwilling to help Valens.⁸ Yet Gratian recognized that the Gothic rebellion could easily spill over into Italy unless care was taken. Furthermore, many of the troops in Illyricum had been assigned to Valens when Valentinian and Valens had divided the empire, and had been deployed to Illyricum during the crisis of Firmus’ revolt in 372.⁹ It would be difficult for Gratian to turn down his uncle’s appeal for help.

Accordingly, Gratian agreed to Valens’ request: he ordered the *dux* Frigeridus with troops from Pannonia to go immediately to Thrace to help his Eastern counterpart. Richomerus, the *comes domesticorum*, was also ordered East with some Gallic units, but according to Ammianus ‘the greater part [of the Gallic troops] had deserted, induced (as some maintained) by Merobaudes, who feared that if Gaul should be deprived of its defences, it would be laid

waste at will by raids from across the Rhine'.¹⁰ This clearly demonstrates both that not everybody in the West was happy about weakening the frontier in order to help the East, but also that Merobaudes was possibly growing in political power and felt able to interfere in the political and military decisions of the emperor himself. These implications would only come to fruition in 383, long after events in Thrace had played themselves out.¹¹ Undeterred, Richomeres continued to Thrace.



Map 32. The East 377.

The Problems Mount: Mavia (*Mâwiyya*) and the Saracen Revolt¹²

Probably in early-mid 377, not long after receiving news of the Gothic revolt and as well as ordering Profuturus and Trajanus to the Balkans, Valens was shocked to learn of yet another problem in the East. One of his Saracen allies, the Tanûkhids, had revolted.¹³ Unfortunately, no ancient source gives the reason for the revolt, and surprisingly Ammianus makes no mention of the event in his history.¹⁴ Instead, we have to rely on other sources, mainly Sozomen. The outbreak of the revolt is described as being after the death of Mavia's husband, following which Mavia had succeeded as 'Queen'.¹⁵ What was surprising was the severity of the revolt:

Mania [Mavia] the widow of the late monarch, after attaining to the government of her race, led her troops into Phoenicia and Palestine, as far as the regions of Egypt lying to the left of those who sail towards the source of the Nile, and which are generally denominated Arabia. This war was by no means a contemptible one, although conducted by a woman.

In the Christian sources such as Sozomen and Socrates Scholasticus the rebellion was caused by Valens attempting to impose an Arian bishop on the Nicene Tanûkhids.¹⁶ However, more recent analysis has suggested that this is a mistake and that Mavia and the Tanûkhids were pagan at the outbreak of the revolt.¹⁷

There are several possible alternative causes for the revolt, but some of these may have combined to force Mavia's hand. The first relates to the upcoming Persian campaign desired by Valens. In order to pay for the campaign Valens had instituted a series of taxes which were extremely high.¹⁸ In desperation, Valens even announced that the *vestis militaris* (clothing tax), a tax usually paid in kind, was to be paid in gold to pay for new recruits.¹⁹ It is known that along the borders of Arabia 'Saracen' peoples had been allowed to settle on Roman soil in return for military service, or had been assimilated into the Empire when the Empire had expanded to include them.²⁰ There can be little doubt that these Saracens, living on agricultural land not capable of growing large surpluses, resented the high taxes imposed by Valens, especially as the simultaneous call for recruits to fight the Persians would have been a double blow to the poorer families. Although the unexpected arrival on the Danube of the Goths, and Valens' desire to use their manpower to supplement his forces would allow Valens to remit the majority of these taxes, not all of the money was returned and none of it by mid 378.

The second concerns the Gothic rebellion in late 376 and early 377. The need to fight a war with the Goths was another unexpected event. The money Valens had already collected in taxes would now need to pay to equip and train the new recruits he would need to fight the new war, as well as defend the borders against the Persians: Shapur had been preparing for a Roman attack and there was no way of telling what action he would take once Valens left for the Balkans. There can be little doubt, therefore, that the Saracen tribesmen living within the Empire, who had already had a large tax demand, now had a demand to furnish conscripts. Unrest along the frontier will have reached a new height.

A third cause may have been that when the Goths rebelled it is almost certain that Valens sent envoys to Mavia requesting that she supply troops, according to their treaty.²¹ Since relations with the Persians were tense, it is unlikely that Mavia would have been happy to have native troops sent to Thrace, leaving their homes 'defenceless' against any Persian attacks.

A further possibility is that Mavia recognized that with war against Persia imminent and war with the Goths ongoing, this was a good time to force concessions from Valens. Yet on their own these hypotheses do not explain the ferocity of the revolt. There must have been a further, unknown reason that triggered so violent and widespread a rebellion.

Although unattested, the policies adopted by Valentinian and Valens towards barbarian 'kings' on the frontiers may give a hint. In 368 Valentinian

had organized the assassination of Vithicabius, one of the leaders of the Alamanni.²² In 374 Marcellinus, *dux per Valeriam* (Duke of Valeria), probably acting on Valentinian's orders, had invited Gabinius, king of the Quadi, to a banquet and then murdered him.²³ In 375 Traianus had used the same method of disposing of Pap of Armenia.²⁴ It is plausible that the '*Dux Phoenices*' (Duke of Phoenicia – it should be noted that the title given the local commander by Sozomen is anachronistic²⁵) had arranged for Mavia's husband to be assassinated in a similar manner.²⁶ Although he is not named in the sources, it has been suggested that the local commander was a man named Maurus.²⁷

If this is true, there remains the question of why Valens felt the need to assassinate Mavia's husband. Imagination can provide many reasons for the decision, but only one may hold any truth. In 377 Shapur had returned from fighting the Kushans and was preparing to defend Persia from an upcoming Roman assault. Secure in his alliance with the Iberian king, but thwarted in Armenia and Iberia, it is possible that Shapur turned his attention south. It is feasible that Mavia's husband had entered into correspondence with Shapur, in a similar manner to Pap earlier, and that Valens had decided to use the same method to deal with the 'King' of the Tanûkhids as he had used – successfully – to deal with the King of Armenia.²⁸ Although hypothesis, the theory does fit with the other suggestions made above.

The hypothesis that the Tanûkhids' king was assassinated on the orders of Rome is not supported by any of the sources, but it would explain why Mavia and the Tanûkhids were so enraged that they attacked all along their frontier with the Empire. In addition, it is likely that Valens' policies had so annoyed those Saracens living inside the Empire that they joined the rebellion, which would help to explain why the attacks were so devastating: the settled Saracens would be able to provide information on where and when to attack.

The extent of the attack supports the theory that this was not simply one minor tribe attacking the frontiers. Mavia's forces plundered the towns and cities of Palestine and Phoenicia all along the Roman frontier, from Phoenicia in the north to Egypt in the south.²⁹

Unable to cope with the ferocity or widespread nature of the attacks:

The general of the Phoenician troops applied for assistance to the general of the entire cavalry and infantry of the East [*magister equitum et peditum per Orientem*]. This latter ridiculed the summons, and undertook to give battle alone.

Sozomen 6.38

Understandably, with the support of the 'Army of the East', the *magister equitum et peditum per Orientem*, identified as Julius, was dismissive of the Tanûkhid threat.³⁰ This proved to be a mistake and he was lucky to escape from the battle:

He accordingly attacked Mania [Mavia], who commanded her own

troops in person; and he was rescued with difficulty by the general of the troops of Palestine and Phoenicia. Perceiving the extremity of the danger, this general deemed it unnecessary to obey the orders he had received to keep aloof from the combat; he therefore rushed upon the barbarians, and furnished his superior an opportunity for safe retreat, while he himself yielded ground and shot at those who fled, and beat off with his arrows the enemies who were pressing upon him. This occurrence is still held in remembrance among the people of the country, and is celebrated in songs by the Saracens.

Sozomen 6.38

Although the battle is not dated in the sources, it may have taken place late in the year. After the battle there were a few more sporadic encounters as the Tanûkhids were encouraged to ‘pursue the war with vigour’.³¹ Eventually, the pressing business of the Goths being allowed to roam freely in the Balkans, coupled with the defeat to the Tanûkhids, encouraged Valens to seek a treaty:

The Romans found it necessary to send an embassy to Mania to solicit peace. It is said that she refused to comply with the request of the embassy, unless consent were given for the ordination of a certain man named Moses, who practiced philosophy in a neighbouring desert, as bishop over her subjects. This Moses was a man of virtuous life, and noted for performing the divine and miraculous signs. On these conditions being announced to the emperor, the chiefs of the army were commanded to seize Moses.

Sozomen 6.38

The negotiations continued, with Valens becoming increasingly anxious to head west to face the Goths. Unfortunately for Valens they would not be concluded until the new year. He would be forced to wait before leading the army west, a period in which the Goths were allowed to roam at will, no doubt increasing their confidence with each success. The ramifications of the delay would be serious as the Gothic problem began to ‘spiral beyond [Valens’] control’.³²

Persia

Before a peace with Mavia had been concluded, and with war threatening to erupt on three fronts, Valens had no option but to send a peace embassy to Shapur. Almost certainly in mid 377, at the latest after hearing of Mavia’s revolt, Valens ordered Victor to travel to Shapur’s court on another embassy.³³ The terms offered by Valens are unknown: it is likely that Valens offered peace with Persia for a set period, but the fact that Shapur failed to launch a major invasion against Rome may simply demonstrate that his prolonged campaigns in the previous decade in Armenia, Iberia and against the Kushans were finally taking their toll. Not only was the Persian army in

need of rest and recuperation, but Shapur himself was now nearly seventy years old.

It is possible, however, that one ‘concession’ was ‘granted’ to Shapur: in return for peace, Valens would ‘withdraw’ the garrisons from Armenia. Valens urgently needed an army to face the Goths in the Balkans and had already pulled Roman forces out of Armenia and sent them west. By portraying the withdrawal of the Armenian garrison as a concession, Valens may have hoped that Shapur would at least agree to a non-aggression treaty.

Although there is little evidence in the sources – the single line in Zosimus that Valens ‘settled with the Persians as best he could’ sums up the problem³⁴ – it is clear that Valens and Shapur reached some form of agreement: the fact that Valens was prepared to leave the east in 377 can be contrasted to Valens’ reluctance to halt the Gothic War of 367–369 to face Shapur, despite Shapur making major strategic headway in the east. Although only implied, it is almost certain that both sides agreed to a cessation of hostilities, at least for the immediate future. In accordance with the new treaty agreed with Shapur, Valens recalled the remainder of the Roman troops stationed in Armenia. Doubtless much to Shapur’s delight, events in Armenia would soon negate the need for a Persian army: Shapur and his troops would be allowed time to rest whilst Armenia would once again change allegiance.

The Gothic War

The exact nature of events after the Gothic ‘defeat’ at the Siege of Adrianople is unclear. Analysis of Ammianus’ account of the ‘Gothic War’ brings to light several problems. Not least of these is that Ammianus gives no clear description of the activities of the Goths other than to say that they were either ‘penned in the mountains’ when the Romans were dominant, or that they ‘spread like a flood over Thrace’ when they were in the ascendant.

Furthermore, as shown in the previous chapter, Ammianus tends to treat the Goths as one enemy, but the evidence shows that in reality there were many groups which formed temporary coalitions when threatened by imperial forces. A close reading makes it clear that in fact the Goths splintered into several bands, roaming at will over the countryside of the Eastern Balkans. Although nowhere stated, it is probable that at least some of these splinter groups were formed of the followers of the deceased Alavivus, still determined not to follow the leadership of Fritigern. These groups would interact with the Romans on an *ad hoc* basis, appearing in the narrative only when they came into conflict with Roman commanders. It is also likely that there were other groups who are not mentioned, either being too few in number to figure in the text, or who decided to re-cross the Danube and seek their kin under Athanaric.

The largest force which remained together appears to have been the one described by Ammianus as ‘The Goths’, under the leadership of Fritigern, Alatheus and Saphrax, but even here these forces tended to operate separately

in order to ease the problems of supply and only came together when menaced by the Roman army.³⁵

One repercussion of Ammianus' decision not to give clear information on barbarian activities is that it is hard to understand the strategy employed by the Roman commanders, except on a very general level. As a result, it is necessary to rely on deduction to estimate the Roman commanders' motives, and so doubt must remain as to the accuracy of the detailed description which follows.

Profuturus and Traianus

In the summer of 377 the army led by Profuturus and Traianus arrived in the Balkans. Although the campaign that followed is described by Ammianus in less-than-complimentary terms, it is clear from the little evidence he includes that in actual fact that campaign began well:

These troops ... drove the enemy beyond the precipitous crags of Mount Haemus and forced them into the steep defiles, in order that shut up in deserted and solitary places, and finding nowhere an outlet, they might be worn out by long continued hunger; they themselves in the meantime would await the coming of the general Frigeridus, who was on his way with the Pannonian and the Transalpine auxiliaries, since Gratian, at Valens' request, had directed him to take the field and bear aid to those who were harassed to the point of utter destruction.

Ammianus 31.7.3

The Roman forces had quickly outmanoeuvred the Tervingi, driving them out of the richer lowlands of Haemimont, where finding supplies would be relatively easy, to the sparsely populated and less abundant regions of the Haemus Mountains and to the Danube Plain in the north, where supplies had already been used up.³⁶ This is hardly surprising: faced by an effective military force the Goths would have had little chance. Impeded by the presence of a large number of non-combatants, the Gothic troops were unable to deploy quickly to face a Roman assault. Nor could they forage effectively: sending out large raiding parties would leave their families vulnerable; sending out small parties would leave the foragers exposed to attack.

The Battle of (Ad) Salices³⁷

With the majority of the enemy penned into the Haemus Mountains, the attention of the Roman commanders moved to the north, where a large group of barbarians had set up their wagons in a laager near to the town of Salices ('Ad Salices', 'By the Willows', placed on the *Antonine Itinerary* between Tomi and Salmuris) and sent out small bands of troops to forage.³⁸ Ammianus gives no indication of who this tribe was, but there are two likely origins. One is that it was one of the original tribes of either the Tervingi or the Greuthungi

that had crossed the Danube in 376 but had been forced to retire to the north rather than to the Haemus Mountains by Roman military pressure. A second is that it was a barbarian tribe that had only recently crossed the Danube in the hope of profiting from the confusion caused by the Gothic War. Both of these suggestions are valid.³⁹

Wherever they had originated, Profuturus and Traianus appear to have decided that the barbarians needed to be eliminated. They were threatening Marcianopolis and their presence not far from the Danube could easily act as a spur to further tribes to cross the river in the hope of profit. On the other hand, defeating the barbarians would act as a deterrent to any tribes across the frontier contemplating an attack on the empire whilst it was seen as being weak. More importantly, they were separated from the other barbarians and due to the less-mountainous terrain in the north it would prove more difficult and take a disproportionate number of troops to maintain a blockade against them. Having already learned that the Western general Frigeridus had been ordered to support them and that at any time he would be joining them, Profuturus and Traianus decided to await his arrival rather than risking all on their own.

Finally, the forces led by Frigeridus and Richomeres arrived and the commanders took counsel as to what course of action to take. Although Frigeridus was the 'senior' commander, he was incapacitated by an attack of gout – or, according to his opponents, feigned illness in order to avoid battle – and so Richomeres took command of the combined forces.⁴⁰ This implies that the troops from the West may have outnumbered the troops from the East.

Unwilling to launch an assault on the barbarians, as their defensive position was too strong, the Roman commanders waited for a chance to attack when the enemy were either off-guard or preparing to move. When the Tervingi became aware of events through information from Roman deserters, they sounded the recall on their trumpets. When the 'marauding bands' returned it was too late in the day to begin battle, so the two sides waited for the following morning.⁴¹

As the sun rose the barbarians formed up their troops and tried to take the nearby dominant heights before the Romans could stop them, but they were halted by a speedy Roman deployment.⁴² Slowly, the two armies closed until, shouting their battle cries, they attacked simultaneously.⁴³ The Romans adopted the *testudo* ('tortoise')⁴⁴ formation and were forced onto the defensive by superior numbers.⁴⁵ At one point in the battle the Tervingi broke through the left wing of the Roman defence, but were met by a strong group of reserves, who reformed the battle line and repulsed the Tervingi.⁴⁶ This implies that the Romans had deployed in the traditional two-line formation to meet the enemy attack.

After a long and ferocious battle, combat was eventually brought to an end by the coming of night and the two sides withdrew to the relative safety of their camps.⁴⁷ The losses on both sides were heavy, and the Romans were

only able to give burials to ‘men of distinction’: it is possible that amongst the dead was Profuturus, the Eastern *magister militum*. The rest of the bodies were left on the battlefield.⁴⁸ On the day after the battle the Roman generals gave the orders to retreat to the city of Marcianopolis. Rather than risking another set-piece battle, they decided to revert to their earlier policy of blockade and starvation to defeat the Tervingi.⁴⁹

Aftermath

Ancient sources are divided on the outcome of the Battle of Ad Salices. Ammianus and others who follow in his footsteps depict the battle as being a hard-fought draw. On the other hand, sources such as Socrates Scholasticus, Theoderet and the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* portray the battle as a defeat, Theoderet even claiming that Traianus was later accused of cowardice by Valens.⁵⁰

The truth would appear to be more complex. Whilst it is true that the Tervingi lost very heavily, the usual sign of victory in ancient warfare was possession of the battlefield and the Tervingi were later discovered to be still in the same camp a week after the battle. Unlike the Tervingi, the Romans can be seen as losing the battle, as they had retreated from the battlefield and returned to Marcianople, only burying ‘men of distinction’ and leaving the rest lying on the battlefield for the scavengers. This doubtless included the Tervingi, who would have searched amongst the slain for useful pieces of equipment, especially armour, helmets and weapons. On the other hand, heavy losses had effectively pinned the Tervingi in position, meaning that the ‘victors’ were unable to take advantage of their triumph. As a result, it is probably best to interpret the battle as a tactical victory for the Tervingi, but a strategic victory for Rome.⁵¹

After regrouping and resting at Marcianople, the Roman forces retook the initiative. The combined forces of East and West again outmanoeuvred the Tervingi, keeping them pinned in the highlands, where it was hoped that they would be starved into submission.⁵² At the same time, Richomeres was sent back to the West, where he hoped to obtain further Gallic reinforcements from Gratian, and messengers were sent to Valens at Antioch informing him of events.⁵³ The claim that Richomeres ‘constantly lobbied Gratian for more support’ appears to be an exaggeration.⁵⁴

No details of the campaign that followed survive. It is clear from Ammianus that a long period of skirmish and minor engagement ensued. The Tervingi and the other barbarians who had been restricted to the mountains and highlands were finding life increasingly difficult and redoubled their efforts to break out from the Roman blockade, a necessary move as the supply situation was becoming critical.⁵⁵ Yet before the end of the year the Roman forces were reinforced from the east. Valens had sent Saturninus – possibly at this time promoted as temporary *magister equitum* – with additional troops, presumably including a strong mounted contingent, to help overcome the

Tervingi.⁵⁶ Taking command of all of the forces in Thrace, Saturninus deployed the army in order to pin the Tervingi ever tighter within the mountains.⁵⁷ From late summer Saturninus organized the ‘fortification’ of the mountain passes and made a great attempt to limit the amount of foraging the Goths could accomplish. The blockade was to last until winter 377 (c. September-November 377), with repeated attempts by the Goths to break out being foiled by the Roman forces.⁵⁸

The Goths Break Out

Pinned in the mountains, the barbarians despatched envoys in the hope of securing help from as-yet ‘free’ tribes. Ammianus confirms their success in one sentence:

And when after many attempts they [the barbarians] were overwhelmed by the vigour of our men, who strongly opposed them amid the rugged heights, compelled by dire necessity they gained an alliance with some of the Huns and Halani [Alans] by holding out the hope of immense booty.

Ammianus 31.8.4

Unfortunately, it is not clear from the brief mention in the narrative whether these Huns and Alans had already crossed the Danube or had remained on the far bank watching events unfold and awaiting their opportunity.

It is possible that in the confusion the two tribes had crossed the Danube and when the messengers arrived they were already inside Thrace plundering unprotected villages. Yet it may be more likely that the two tribes were still on the far bank of the Danube. This is the first appearance of the Huns on the Danube, and they may have been wary of attacking the Roman Empire, which up to this time will have been known to them only by the rumour of its power and wealth. It is also doubtful that they would have crossed the Danube – a major obstacle to cavalry – without being convinced of victory, as the river would block their line of retreat if they were attacked by superior forces. Furthermore, the Balkans had been the scene of devastating warfare and siege for nearly two years. It is unlikely that two tribes already in the area would be convinced by the ‘hope of immense booty’: all of the valuables had been gathered into the cities or already looted.

With these deliberations in mind, it is almost certain that the Huns and Alans were still on the far side of the Danube when they were contacted by the barbarian envoys. If this is correct, then it is most likely that the group of barbarians who had ‘won’ the Battle of Salices had then sent men to cross the Danube in the hope of securing allies as yet unaffected by the Roman blockade. They were the only ‘Gothic’ group with ready access to the river and they had ample time to send envoys after their ‘victory’ in battle at Ad Salices. The theory is supported by the concept that part of their reason for waiting in their camp for so long after the battle was in the hope of receiving

reinforcements and also by the next recorded barbarian attack (see below).

As soon as he became aware of the development, Saturninus realized that his dispersed forces were in danger of becoming surrounded by the highly mobile cavalry of the Huns and Alans. He decided that discretion was the better part of valour, recalled all of his troops to a central mustering point and withdrew to the cities.⁵⁹ At about the same time orders arrived from the West recalling Frigeridus and ordering him to withdraw and protect Thrace from any marauding bands of barbarians who had taken advantage of the war and crossed the undefended Danube further to the west.

The Battle of Dibaltum

Released from the confines of the mountains, the Tervingi quickly spread over the whole region in their quest for supplies, devastating the areas between the Rhodope Mountains and the sea at the Hellespont.⁶⁰ At the same time, the barbarians in the north, along with their new allies, left the area of Marcianople and headed south, both to establish closer contact with other tribes already in Thrace and to find fresh areas for plunder: by now the area around Marcianople will have had no supplies left, except those secure in Roman cities.

As they travelled south they passed close to the town of Dibaltum (Burgas). Nearing the town, the barbarians became aware that a Roman force was pitching camp outside the city, probably prior to taking up quarters as the winter garrison. Barzimeres, *tribunum scutariorum* (Tribune/Commander of the Guards), had under his command the Cornuti, a unit of the *auxilia palatinum*, and 'other companies of infantry' (*et alius peditum numeris*). It is possible that Equitius, the *cura palatii* (Marshal of the Court) and a relative of Valens, was also present at this battle, although Ammianus does not state this explicitly.⁶¹

Taking the Romans completely by surprise, the barbarians attacked. After a determined resistance the battle was won by a cavalry charge which surrounded Barzimeres. The Roman commander and many of his men were killed, and the barbarians then continued on their journey to the south.⁶²

Frigeridus⁶³

Escaping from the valleys of the Haemus Mountains, Fritigern now took stock of his situation. The Eastern troops had retired and could easily take refuge in fortified cities. On the other hand Frigeridus, the Western commander, had been recalled, was a long way from secure bases, and had taken refuge in a fortification he had built near to Beroea/Beroia.⁶⁴ Fritigern decided to lead his forces in pursuit of Frigeridus. Fritigern may have thought that defeating the Western forces under Frigeridus would clear the passes to the West and allow the Goths to escape from the confines of Thrace, a territory already ravaged by over a year of conflict and where the majority of the supplies had by now been gathered and taken to the safety of the cities, where they were inaccessible to the Goths. On the other hand, he may have believed that a

victory over Frigeridus would dampen the West's enthusiasm for the war and leave him free to deal solely with Valens in the East. In hindsight, it may be that Fritigern, knowing that he had as yet faced only a small part of the Eastern army, was hoping that a quick victory over Frigeridus coupled with the threat of a descent of the Goths towards Italy could leave him with a strong bargaining counter in future talks with both East and West. Unfortunately, the reasons for his decision will never be known.

As the Goths advanced towards Frigeridus he became aware of their intentions and quickly dismantled his camp. Using his expert knowledge of the area, he used little-known paths through the mountainous and forested terrain to evade the attack.⁶⁵ Luck was on his side: not only did he evade the Goths, but his unusual direction of march meant that as he entered Illyricum he encountered a band of roving Goths and Taifali under the leadership of a man named Farnobius.⁶⁶ Whether these were part of the main Gothic force hoping to attack him, or a separate, unconnected army is unknown.

Unaware of his approach, the barbarians were taken completely by surprise by his sudden assault. Farnobius was killed in the initial stages of the attack and the survivors quickly surrendered. Frigeridus sent the prisoners to Italy, where Gratian settled them in the neighbourhood of Mutina, Regium and Parma to work the fields.⁶⁷ The year would end in victory in the Balkans.⁶⁸

It is possible that Farnobius was allied to Fritigern and was leading his troops in the hope of finding Frigeridus. After the battle there is no other mention of the Gothic pursuit and Ammianus gives no reason for Fritigern's failure to attack Frigeridus. The defeat of a portion of his forces may be the only reason why Fritigern called off the pursuit.

Whatever the cause of the Goth's failure to pursue Frigeridus, the fact that they did not do so allowed him time to secure the Succi Pass and other exits to the West.⁶⁹ However, the Goths remained free to wander the rest of the Balkans, from the Plain of the Danube to the Rhodope Mountains to the sea at the Hellespont, at will:⁷⁰ only the cities were safe. To defeat them Valens would have to deploy the *praesental* army, at this time still facing the Persians in the east.

The Persecutions

As winter approached, Valens made a major decision. Under internal pressure from the Nicenes, the Isaurians, and the Goths, and external pressure from the Persians, Valens finally relented in his attempt to convert the East to Arianism. Valens issued a law recalling the Nicene exiles: 'Valens, forced to leave Antioch, in tardy penitence recalls our people from exile.'⁷¹ By 27 December 377 the exiles were returning to Edessa: the persecutions were over.⁷² Peter of Alexandria returned to his city and expelled the Arian Lucius in early 378, and Meletius returned to Antioch, Eusebius to Samosata and Eulogius to Edessa. Valens had realized that a continuation of his divisive religious policy was threatening the stability of his empire when it was facing

threats and emergencies on all fronts.⁷³ With the internal problems of the East being eased, Valens worked hard to end the military crisis on the eastern borders so that he could leave Antioch with the army to face the Goths.

Back in the Balkans, Saturninus was forced on to the defensive and would have to wait for the arrival of the emperor with the main imperial army before facing the enemy in battle. In the meantime, the Goths and their allies prepared to winter in camps between Nicopolis and Beroea.⁷⁴ They too would now be forced to await the new campaign season of 378, when fresh crops would be grown and they would have the chance of securing further supplies.

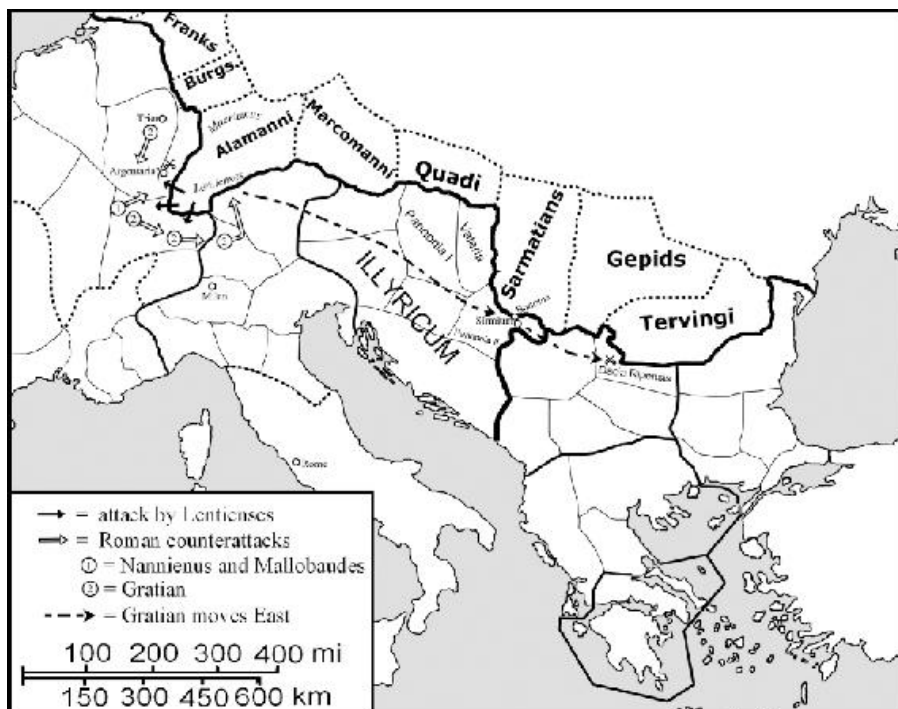
Chapter 16

The ‘Calm’ Before the Storm

THE WEST

Towards the end of 377 it became clear to Gratian that unless help arrived in the Balkans the East would struggle to maintain control of the area. Although the passes to the West had been blocked, there was no guarantee that the Goths could be kept under control indefinitely. Decisive action was necessary.

Early in the new year Gratian’s forces began the move to Illyricum. According to Ammianus, a tribesman of the Lentienses who was serving as a guardsman in the Roman army was home on leave and informed his people that Gratian was leaving for the East to help defeat the Goths.¹ Breaking their treaty with Rome, some of the tribesmen formed themselves into ‘predatory bands, and in the month of February tried to cross the Rhine, which was sufficiently frozen over to be passable’. Fortunately for Gratian, the Celtae and the Petulantes, two units of the *auxilia palatina*, were camped nearby and repulsed the attack, although with heavy loss to themselves.² Undeterred, the Lentienses gathered greater force – according to Ammianus ‘forty thousand armed men, or seventy thousand, as some boasted in order to exaggerate the emperor’s glory’ – and forced their way into Imperial territory. Included in their number was the ‘king’, Priarius.³



Map 33. Gratian and the Lentienses

In this account we face one of the most frustrating aspects of Roman literature from the period: the ease with which a tribal label could be applied. It is unclear whether these Lentienses were the same tribesmen, also called Lentienses, which Constantius II had defeated earlier in the century.⁴ The problem lies with a combination of the Roman practice of using both loose terminology and standardized *topoi* to describe the barbarians along with the political fluidity of the individual tribes, who could easily fragment and form new coalitions – a practice poorly understood by Roman historians.

Whether they were the same or a different group made little difference to Gratian. When he received news of the attack, Gratian recalled the troops who had already moved to Pannonia and, joining them with the forces that had remained in Gaul, gave command to Nannienus, a proven general, and Mallobaudes, the *comes domesticorum*. Their orders were to defeat the Lentienses and force them to retire from Roman soil.⁵ At some date after 20 April Gratian left Trier, and proceeded towards the East with the *praesental* army.⁶

The Battle of Argentaria⁷

Probably in May 377 the Romans and the Lentienses met in battle at Argentaria, somewhere in Gaul. After a long struggle, the Romans emerged victorious, with only 5,000 Lentienses escaping from the conflict. Amongst the slain was 'King' Priarius. Although the location of the battle is unclear,

and doubtless the number of combatants is wildly exaggerated, it is certain that the Romans defeated a minor invasion at this time.⁸

Gratian

When news of the victory reached Gratian he made a quick decision and changed his route of march, swinging north to attack the Lentienses' homeland. The decision has caused controversy ever since. It is usually portrayed in a negative light, either being interpreted as Gratian not wanting to go East to help his uncle, sometimes coupled with a desire on Gratian's part to obtain a military reputation of his own, or being seen as evidence of a split between Gratian and Valens, with Gratian being unwilling to help his uncle due to personal differences.⁹ On the other hand, some have interpreted Gratian's change of direction as being forced upon him by circumstances, and have confidently stated that Gratian wanted to help his uncle Valens in the fight against the Goths but was diverted by the attack of the Lentienses.¹⁰

The confusion is not helped by contradictions in the primary sources. Whereas Ammianus is complementary about Gratian and implies that he was happy to lead his army east, Zosimus states that both Gratian and Valentinian II were reluctant to send troops east, since the problem did not directly involve the Western empire.¹¹

To analyze the little information given by the sources, it is necessary to look at the chronology. To suggest that Gratian saw events on the Danube only in light of their implications for the West overlooks his immediate reaction to the Gothic rebellion: he had immediately sent some of his troops to the area to help in the conflict. Although these may have been limited in number and quality, it should be remembered that at this early stage the scale of the rebellion was unknown and Gratian most likely sent what he believed were enough troops to help the East bring the rebellion to a stop. Furthermore, the fact that they were sent at all implies that, unlike Valentinian I in 366, Gratian saw the rebellion as a problem and was willing to help defeat it.

Furthermore, when Gratian left Trier at some time after 20 April he will have almost certainly known that Valens was expecting to be at Antioch until at least spring, waiting for the negotiations to be concluded with both Persia and Mavia. Therefore, he will have known that he had time to spare to launch a punitive campaign against the Lentienses. Not only would this enhance his reputation as a general, but success against a weak enemy would improve the morale of the Western troops prior to their battle against the Goths, a much more formidable foe who had already scored successes against Roman forces in the Balkans.

There is one other reason for Gratian's willingness to turn aside: between 367 and 370 Valens had repeatedly invaded the homeland of the Tervingi and had been successful in these campaigns. Gratian will have expected Valens, supported by the full might of the Eastern army, to be successful against the Goths even without his aid: the success of the campaign was assured, and

Gratian will not have felt the need to rush to the Balkans.

Unfortunately, many commentators – both ancient and modern – have viewed the entire campaign in hindsight. Knowing that Valens would face defeat at Adrianople, they have manufactured reasons for Gratian being late to the battle: either he was understandably delayed by the necessity to defeat the Lentienses, or he was unwilling to travel at the speed necessary to help Valens at the battle. This is a mistake. Gratian expected Valens to attack the Goths without help if he thought he could win easily, and believed that Valens would wait if there was any danger of being defeated. The reasons behind Valens' decision are outlined below, but Gratian was right in thinking that he had enough time to defeat the Lentienses before he helped his uncle. With peace ensured on the Rhine, Gratian ordered his army East.

THE EAST

Mavia

Over the winter of 377–378 negotiations continued with Mavia. Little is known of the resulting treaty, but as it was the Romans who had opened negotiations it is probable that Mavia made the most of her strong position. It is possible that Roman moves to establish a peace treaty with Persia helped to bring Mavia into line with the Roman proposals: with no threat to her people from a Persian invasion, she may have been more willing to accept Valens' request for a supply of troops to serve in the Balkans.

One aspect of the treaty may have been the granting of better trade provisions for Mavia, along with an increase in the amount to be paid as subsidies.¹² A further clause was the agreement that Mavia's daughter would marry Victor, *magister equitum in praesentales* (Master of the Cavalry in the Emperor's Presence).¹³ By accepting the presence of Mavia's daughter so close to the throne, Valens was displaying that Mavia had been successful around the bargaining table.

However, the major effect, at least as far as Christian sources were concerned, was that Mavia and her people agreed to convert to Christianity.¹⁴ Yet in one respect the decision was to be a blow to Valens. Mavia demanded that the new bishop be a man of 'Saracen birth' and of her own choosing.¹⁵ As a result, she was converted to the Nicene form of Christianity. It is possible that this was her own preference, as conforming to the emperor's religion would have immediately broadcast the message that the Tanûkhids were subservient to Valens.¹⁶ However, she may not have had a choice:

It is said that she refused to comply with the request of the embassy, unless consent were given for the ordination of a certain man named Moses, who practiced philosophy in a neighbouring desert, as bishop over her subjects. This Moses was a man of virtuous life, and noted for performing the divine and miraculous signs. On these conditions being announced to the emperor, the chiefs of the army were commanded to seize Moses, and conduct him to Lucius [Arian

Bishop of Alexandria]. The monk exclaimed, in the presence of the rulers and the assembled people, 'I am not worthy of the honour of bearing the name and dignity of chief priest; but if, notwithstanding my unworthiness God destines me to this office, I take Him to witness who created the heavens and the earth, that I will not be ordained by the imposition of the hands of Lucius, which are defiled with the blood of holy men' ... Having again protested, upon oath, that he would not receive ordination [from Lucius] he went to the Saracens. He reconciled them to the Romans, and converted many to Christianity, and passed his life among them as a priest, although he found few who shared in his belief.

Sozomen 6.38

Finally, the Eastern frontier was, theoretically at least, at peace. A treaty had been agreed with Mavia, a non-aggression pact had been signed with Shapur, and the troops in Isauria had subdued the revolt in that area. In April 378 Valens was able to leave Antioch and take his army west.¹⁷ He would never return.

Armenia

Although 'peace' had been agreed between Rome and Persia, once again the Romans had been forced to evacuate Armenia and leave it defenceless in the face of Persian aggression. With the removal of Roman military power, the kingdom of Armenia quickly became politically divided, especially with reference to King Varazdat's guardian Mushel Mamikonean. As a strong supporter of the alliance with Rome, it is probable that Mushel's position was safe as long as Roman troops were in Armenia. Although the chronology is unclear, it is likely that shortly after the withdrawal of the Roman troops a plot was hatched amongst the Armenian courtiers to remove Mushel from power. Varazdat was convinced by the courtiers that Mushel was not fit to serve him, largely due to Mushel's courteous treatment of the Persian captives taken during the earlier wars. Mushel was invited to a banquet with the king, during the course of which he was arrested and executed.¹⁸ His place was taken by a noble named Bat.¹⁹ However, after what P'awstos describes as a brief civil war Bat was replaced by a relative of Mushel named Manuel: Varazdat was forced to flee to Constantinople.²⁰

Despite the long attachment of his family to Rome, Manuel had evicted Rome's appointee to the throne and now had little choice but to turn to Shapur for support. With Valens on the way to face the Goths, and with all of the Roman troops having been withdrawn from Armenia, Shapur knew that he would face no opposition along the Roman frontier for the foreseeable future. Although his losses in the previous wars may have made him wary of fighting another, the appeal of Manuel for support could not be ignored: Shapur sent the Suren (Persian general) with 10,000 armed cavalrymen to support Manuel. After their arrival, Arsaces and Valarsaces, the sons of Pap, were crowned

joint kings under the protection of Persia. In return for their support, Manuel agreed to pay for the upkeep of the new Persian garrison.²¹ The rebellion in the Balkans had already undone one of the major triumphs of Valens' reign: the recovery of control of Armenia.

Yet things were not to proceed smoothly for Shapur. Following their traditional methods of dealing with Rome and Persia, some of the Armenian *narakhars*, notably a noble named Merushan, proceeded to sow discord between Manuel and Shapur.²² By the time of these events Shapur was seventy years old, and during the later years of his reign he had fought almost continuous wars with Rome and the Kushans. He was now obliged to focus his remaining energies on Armenia, in the process neglecting to take advantage of Roman weakness by a direct attack on the empire itself.²³ This left Valens free in turn to concentrate on defeating the Goths in the Balkans.

Valens' Army

The crisis on the Danube and along the Eastern frontier had forced major changes on Valens' military dispositions and command structure. In 376, at the start of the rebellion, Valens had employed the usual two *magistri militiae*: Arintheus as *magister peditum* and Victor as *magister equitum*. Both of these men had been deployed ready to face the Persians in the anticipated campaign. With the rebellion of the Goths in 377, Valens had appointed Traianus and Profuturus as *magistri militiae vacans* (Masters of the Army, without specific assignment) and ordered them to crush the Goths in the Balkans. Unfortunately, Profuturus appears to have been killed in the Battle of Ad Salices, and the indications are that Saturninus was appointed to replace him as *magister militum vacans*. Furthermore, at the end of the year the revolt of Mavia appears to have resulted in Valens promoting Julius to the post of *magister peditum et equitum* with the specific task of crushing the new rebellion. This resulted in there being five *magistri militiae* – Arintheus, Victor, Traianus, Saturninus and Julius – at the end of the year.²⁴

With regards to the army, the troops under Julius had been defeated by Mavia; the troops guarding Armenia had been withdrawn and had been 'defeated' by the Goths in the Balkans; and there was still the need to deploy troops in Isauria to maintain control of the region and suppress any ideas the inhabitants had of a further rebellion. The resources of the East were stretched to breaking point.

Valens Heads West

At last Valens was ready to move. Leaving only a garrison force to protect the Eastern frontier, in the spring of 378 Valens led his army west. Arriving at Constantinople on 30 May 378 he received a shock:²⁵

He had no sooner arrived at Constantinople than he incurred the suspicion and hatred of the people. The barbarians were pillaging Thrace, and were even advancing to the very suburbs, and attempted

to make an assault on the very walls, with no one to hinder them. The city was indignant at this inertness; and the people even charged the emperor with being a party to their attack, because he did not sally forth, but delayed offering battle. At length, when he was present at the sports of the Hippodrome, the people openly and loudly accused him of neglecting the affairs of the state, and demanded arms that they might fight in their own defence. Valens, offended at these reproaches, immediately undertook an expedition against the barbarians; but he threatened to punish the insolence of the people on his return, and also to take vengeance on them for having formerly supported the tyrant Procopius.

Sozomen 6.39

The account is echoed by Socrates:

The Emperor Valens ... found the people in a very dejected state of mind: for the barbarians, who had already desolated Thrace, were now laying waste the very suburbs of Constantinople, there being no adequate force at hand to resist them. But when they undertook to make near approaches, even to the walls of the city, the people became exceedingly troubled, and began to murmur against the emperor; accusing him of having brought on the enemy thither, and then indolently prolonging the struggle there, instead of at once marching out against the barbarians. Moreover at the exhibition of the sports of the Hippodrome, all with one voice clamoured against the emperor's negligence of the public affairs, crying out with great earnestness, 'Give us arms, and we ourselves will fight.'

Soc. 4.38

Valens was infuriated by these claims and on 11 June left the city, 'threatening that if he returned, he would punish the citizens not only for their insolent reproaches, but for having previously favoured the pretensions of the usurper Procopius; declaring also that he would utterly demolish their city, and cause the plough to pass over its ruins'.²⁶

His anger at the citizens of Constantinople is understandable: the citizens were only concerned with their own welfare and dismissive of the events in the east which had delayed Valens' arrival. Furthermore, when Valens arrived he had summoned at least some of the military commanders to report on events over winter. Their arrival would have taken time, a further delay that was not acceptable to the populace.

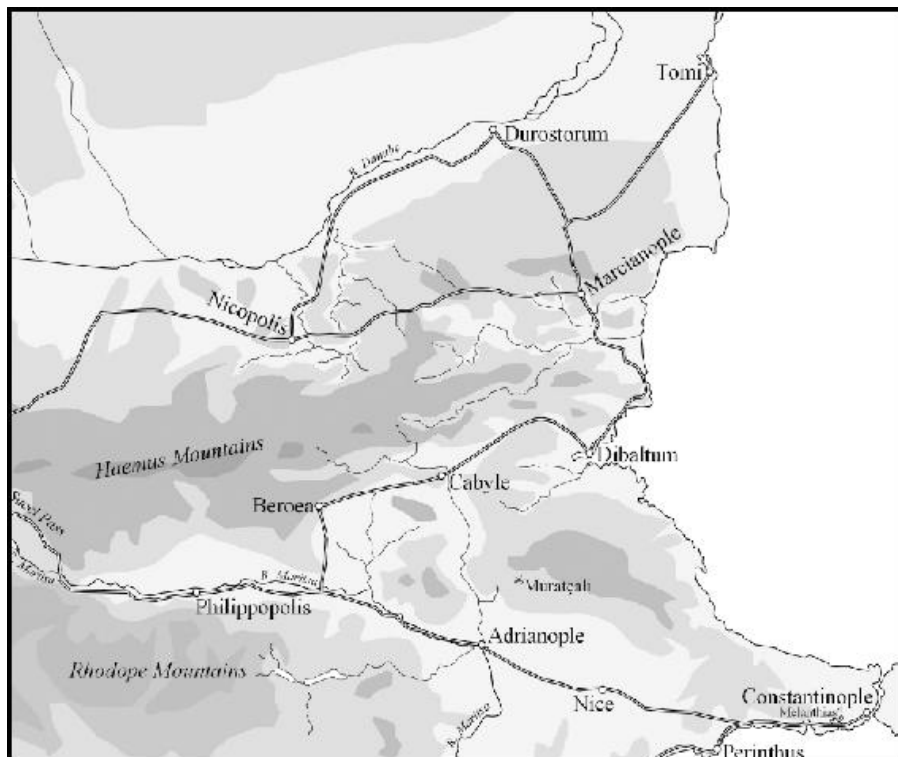
More importantly, he was hindered in his actions by the continuing shortage of troops. Not only was the majority of the army still travelling to Constantinople, but the Thracian army appears to have disintegrated after the defeat of Lupicinus at the battle of Marcianople, as it was not available to defend the area around Constantinople, and the *praesental* troops that he had

earlier sent to quell the rebellion had suffered heavy casualties at the Battle of Ad Salices.²⁷ In order to help make up the losses, Valens issued a recall of discharged veterans in the hope that this would help swell his forces for the upcoming confrontation.²⁸

It should be noted that at this point our sources disagree: contrary to Ammianus, who included the event later (see below), Zosimus claims that at this time Valens sent out his ‘Saracen’ cavalry – probably the troops supplied by Mavia – to clear the area around Constantinople of ravaging barbarian bands. Due to their mobility, they succeeded in this enterprise, clearing the way for the rest of the army to congregate on the capital unmolested by barbarian attacks.²⁹ Unfortunately, there is no definitive way of deciding which of the two accounts is more reliable, except for the fact that Zosimus was writing long after the event, so his account must be discarded in favour of Ammianus’ contemporary version.

Leaving the capital, Valens took up residence at the ‘Imperial Villa’ of Melanthius and awaited the arrival of his commanders and the troops following from the east. When they arrived he paid the troops their outstanding wages, distributed plentiful supplies and made encouraging speeches designed to win their favour.³⁰

He also reorganized his command system. Traianus was accused by Valens of cowardice with regards to his conduct in the war. Traianus responded with the accusation that his defeat was the cause of Valens’ religious policies, and was supported by both Arinthaëus and Victor, his fellow *magistri*. Despite his protestations, Traianus was dismissed.³¹ His place was taken by a newcomer to the Eastern court. When Valentinian I had died in late 375 Sebastianus, Valentinian’s *comes rei militaris*, had been posted to a ‘distant post’ by Merobaudes and the other officers who had elevated Valentinian II to *Augustus*.³² Unhappy at being excluded from court, and allegedly disgusted at the Western emperors being controlled by ‘eunuch chamberlains’, Sebastianus requested a transfer to the Eastern army. At the same time, and aware of Sebastianus’ military ability, Valens had also requested that he be sent east. Thanks to the grave conditions in the Balkans, his request was accepted in the West and at roughly the same time that Valens entered Constantinople Sebastianus also arrived. Valens received Sebastianus’ offer of service ‘gratefully’ and, apparently unhappy at the quality of the Eastern commanders, immediately promoted him to be *magister militum* in place of Traianus.³³



Map 34. The Balkans (after MacDowall).

Arintheus, Traianus and Sebastianus

Although not specifically stated in the sources, it would appear that at about this time, and definitely prior to the campaign against the Goths, Valens suffered a major setback: Arintheus, his *magister peditum*, died.³⁴ Valens decided to replace him rather than relying on the four *magistri* still in place. Relenting his earlier decision, Traianus was again promoted to the post of *magister militum*. The reasons behind the decision are unknown. With the death of Arintheus Valens had three *magistri* in the Balkans, meaning that there would always be a ‘majority vote’ when it came to receiving advice. Instead, Valens once again had five *magistri*: four in Thrace and one in the East, facing Persia. The appointment of Traianus would mean that when it came to the crunch opinions would be divided.³⁵

With his appointments made, Valens now prepared for the upcoming military campaign before leading the army to the town of Nice in Thrace.³⁶ At around this time he will have been informed that the Goths were mainly centred upon camps at Cabyle and Beroea, and a fortified camp at Nicopolis.³⁷ However, once in the town:

He learnt from intelligence brought by his scouts, that the barbarians, who had collected a rich booty, were returning loaded with it from the districts about Mount Rhodope, and were now near

Adrianople. They, hearing of the approach of the emperor with a numerous force, were hastening to join their countrymen, who were in strong positions around Beroea and Nicopolis; and immediately (as the ripeness of the opportunity thus thrown in his way required) the emperor ordered Sebastian to hasten on with three hundred picked soldiers of each legion, to do something (as he promised) of signal advantage to the commonweal.

Ammianus 31.11.2

According to Zosimus, Sebastianus asked Valens for the opportunity to lead a picked force against the invaders. In this account Sebastianus followed ancient tradition and military precedent in assuming that an army which had been repeatedly defeated by the enemy would need to be retrained before adopting a style of guerrilla warfare aimed at winning many small victories. In this manner the army would have its confidence renewed, whereas the many small defeats would hopefully dent the confidence of the opposition.³⁸

In both accounts Sebastianus chose a select force picked from the troops at Nice.³⁹ However, it should be noted that although the translation of Ammianus has '300 men from each legion', the Latin word is *numeros* (*numerus*: 'troop', 'band', 'unit') suggesting that Sebastianus chose troops from throughout the army, not just from the legions.

As the barbarians withdrew from Adrianople:

Sebastianus pushed on by forced marches, and came in sight of the enemy near [the city]; but as the gates were barred against him, he was unable to approach nearer, since the garrison feared that he had been taken prisoner by the enemy, and won over by them.

Ammianus 31.11.3

Eventually, it became clear that Sebastianus was Valens' military commander and the city opened its gates, allowing the troops to eat and rest safe from a surprise attack by the Goths. On the following morning Sebastianus led his men out of the city, his exit being unseen by the withdrawing enemy, and pursued the Goths. Towards evening:

being partially concealed by the rising ground and some trees, he suddenly caught sight of the predatory bands of the Goths near the river Maritza, where, favoured by the darkness of night, he charged them while in disorder and unprepared, routing them so completely that, with the exception of a few whom swiftness of foot saved from death, the whole body were slain, and he recovered such an enormous quantity of booty, that neither the city, nor the extensive plains around could contain it.

Ammianus 31.11.4

Although Ammianus' account is certainly exaggerated, the fact that the

previously defenceless Roman army had defeated a large Gothic raiding party was a signal that Fritigern had lost the initiative. When the survivors of the attack reached Fritigern's camp he was informed not only that Sebastianus had won a victory, but that this was only the first attack: the emperor and the Roman field army was at Nice preparing for a campaign against the Goths. Fritigern immediately sent messages throughout the region informing the various tribes of what had happened and requesting that they converge upon the town of Cabyle. Around the town the land was flat and so there was less chance of a Roman ambush, plus supplies in the region would be more plentiful and the danger of being blockaded into submission was alleviated.⁴⁰

Throughout the campaign, whenever the Romans gained the initiative Fritigern would be faced by a quandary: to gain the supplies needed, he would be forced to send out parties of men to forage, and these would be open to attack. The obvious solution would be to strengthen the raiding parties, but this would reduce the number of men available to defend the Goths' families and dependents. Fritigern would have to walk the fine line between starvation and eradication.⁴¹

Unhindered, the barbarian forces had been ranging far and wide across the Balkans. As the message was dispatched by Fritigern Sebastianus continued his 'guerrilla' campaign against the Goths, catching many bands either before Fritigern's message had reached them, or as they were en route to the designated muster point. It is possible that during this campaign Sebastianus advised Valens to return to Constantinople and allow him to outmanoeuvre the Goths, forcing them back into the mountains and defeating them piecemeal by a combination of starvation and brute force.⁴² Unfortunately, this is contradicted by later information given by Ammianus, and it may be that Zosimus is being led astray by his high regard for Sebastianus.⁴³

The exact nature and extent of Sebastianus' operations is unknown. However, it would appear that he conducted them from Valens' arrival at Nice until the emperor advanced to Adrianople, so beginning in late spring and lasting throughout the summer of 378.⁴⁴

At last, Valens determined upon a course of action for the main army, doubtless spurred into action by Sebastianus' exaggerated claims of victory and the numbers of the enemy killed.⁴⁵ Knowing that Gratian would use the Succi Pass to enter the Maritsa Plain, he decided to leave Nice and head for Adrianople before continuing on to Beroea, where one of the three main Gothic encampments was situated. Not only would this prevent the Goths from cutting the east-west road and so severing communications between himself and Gratian, but Valens almost certainly hoped that the Gothic forces in the area would be caught between the two imperial armies and crushed.⁴⁶ As he moved with the army towards Adrianople, he will have hoped that before long the Gothic rebellion would be over and that he could return to focusing on the main threat to the Romans: Persia.

Gratian

After his victory over the Lentienses, Gratian moved to support his uncle in the East. He sent Richomeres with news of events in the West and with the request that Valens should await his coming before risking a pitched battle with the Goths.⁴⁷ It is probable that Richomeres took with him only a mounted escort, not an 'advance force'.⁴⁸ Gratian himself sent ahead his baggage before leaving with some 'lightarmed troops', travelling via Bononia (Bonaster) to Sirmium, where he rested for four days.⁴⁹

The fact that he only had with him a few light troops can be used to imply that Gratian was not serious in his attempt to help Valens, and that he was only travelling ahead to give the impression of being eager to help. This would be a mistake. In the ancient world communications were poor and Gratian would have few means of gathering intelligence about events in the East. As with Theodosius prior to the campaigns in both Britain and Africa, Gratian was intent on arriving on the scene before the bulk of the army and updating himself on recent events. At the same time, his swift presence in the Balkans would allow him to confer with his uncle and decide what action to take before the slow-moving Western army arrived. It should also be noted that Gratian may have been planning to use the strategy of dividing the Goths before penning them back into the mountains and defeating them in detail. Although the plan had been abandoned by Saturninus in the face of the barbarians' alliance with the Huns and Alans, with the combined might of both the Eastern and Western armies the outcome of such a course would clearly result in a victory with few losses for the Romans.

Unfortunately for both Gratian and Valens, Gratian's plans were yet again disrupted. Leaving Sirmium Gratian moved to the 'Camp of Mars' (Martis Castra), an unidentified small town in Dacia Ripensis.⁵⁰ Here he suffered intermittent fevers before his advance party was attacked by a group of Alans. Although the Alans were repulsed and Gratian soon recovered from his illness, the further delay was to prove fateful.⁵¹

Before the Western Emperor could arrive on the scene, Valens set out for Adrianople. It was now that fateful decisions would be made regarding his next course of action.

Chapter 17

The Battle of Adrianople

Following traditional Roman practice, as he advanced Valens sent out scouts (*procursores*) to confirm the location of the enemy and report on their disposition and movement. At some point on the march between Constantinople and Adrianople he was informed that there was an enemy force to the north intent on crossing the mountain passes and blocking the supply route between Adrianople and Constantinople.¹ The enemy numbers were probably seen as being small, since Valens did not immediately move to counter the Goths. Yet Valens understandably appears to have remained cautious, since at this early stage the scouts had only seen an enemy force emerging from the passes. He did not know whether this was a raiding party or the vanguard to a larger force.

Valens also knew that a Gothic attack could create havoc amongst his marching columns, so in order to guard his right flank and ensure that the enemy did not have the advantage of higher ground from which to attack, Valens immediately dispatched a unit of infantry archers and a 'turma' of cavalry to 'secure the advantages of the narrow passes, which were near by'.² It would seem that these men were not sent to 'block the mountain passes', as is sometimes claimed, but to seize the high ground along the army's line of march and guard against a surprise attack.³

During the next three days, as Valens cautiously moved towards Adrianople, the enemy were also advancing slowly 'through unfrequented places, since they feared a sally, [and] were fifteen miles from the city ... making for the station of Nice'.⁴

At this point the *procursores* returned, claiming that this was a major Gothic force but was only 10,000 strong.⁵ Although Ammianus' description is usually accepted at face value, the idea that the scouting was of poor quality, possibly due to a paucity of light cavalry, is almost certainly mistaken.⁶ Valens' force will have included well-trained cavalry units as part of the *praesental* army who were capable of giving accurate information. The information was almost certainly correct: it was only after the initial report that further enemy troops and deserters arrived to bolster the Gothic forces.

Now certain of the location of the main Gothic force in the region, Valens made the decision to continue the advance to Adrianople, and there to await the arrival of Gratian with the Western army.⁷ However, still concerned about the possibility of a Gothic ambush, he arrayed the army in a 'square

formation' to protect his flanks and 'came to the vicinity of a suburb of Adrianople, where he made a strong rampart of stakes, surrounded by a moat, and impatiently waited for Gratian'.⁸

Shortly afterwards Richomeres, Gratian's *comes domesticorum* (Count of the Household), arrived from the West with a letter from Gratian outlining the reasons for the delayed arrival of the Western army and informing Valens that he was now on his way. It is likely that Richomeres also advised Valens how long that delay would be: it is probable that it would be several days, if not weeks, before Gratian arrived from the West.

The Council

Uncertain of what to do, on 8 August Valens convened a military council in order to discuss which course of action to take. Unfortunately, there are two distinct traditions as to the nature of the council, one relayed by Ammianus, the other by Zosimus. It is worth quoting both in full:

There he received Richomeres, general of the household troops, sent in advance by Gratian with a letter, in which he said that he himself also would soon be there. Since the contents besought him to wait a while for the partner in his dangers, and not rashly to expose himself alone to serious perils, Valens called a council of various of his higher officers and considered what ought to be done. And while some, influenced by Sebastianus, urged him to give battle at once, the man called Victor, a commander of cavalry, a Sarmatian by birth, but foresighted and careful, with the support of many others recommended that his imperial colleague be awaited, so that, strengthened by the addition of the Gallic army, he might the more easily crush the fiery over-confidence of the barbarians.

Ammianus 31.12.4–6

Sebastianus sent a request to the emperor, desiring him to remain where he then was, and not to advance; since it was not easy to bring such a multitude to a regular engagement. He, moreover, observed that it would be better to protract the war in harassing them by ambushes, until they should be reduced to despair from the want of necessities, and rather than expose themselves to the misery and destruction of famine, either surrender themselves, or depart from the Roman territory and submit to the Huns. While he gave the emperor this counsel, his adversaries persuaded him to march forward with his whole army; that the Barbarians were almost destroyed, and the emperor might gain a victory without trouble. Their counsel, though the least prudent, so far prevailed, that the emperor led forth his whole army without order.

Zosmus 4.23–24 (Trans Green and Chaplin)

Ammianus claims that Sebastianus was one of the commanders pressing for a battle, whilst Zosimus claims that Sebastianus was one of the commanders who wanted to wait for Gratian. At first glance it is difficult to know which of the two historians to believe.

The first question is where Ammianus obtained his information. It is usually assumed that he talked to survivors of the battle. The question remains as to why the top-level survivors would tell Ammianus of their actions in such detail. The assumption must remain open to question. On the other hand, it is almost certain that Theodosius I set up an official enquiry into the battle some time after 379, although no details of this survive.⁹

The enquiry would rely on the testimony of the survivors, especially Victor, the *magister equitum*, Saturninus, *magister militum vacans*, and Richomeres, the Western *comes domesticorum*, all of whom were probably present during the debates that took place. Unfortunately, all of these men had good reason to ensure that blame fell on those who had died rather than themselves. Accordingly, the testimony of Victor and Saturninus will have blamed Sebastianus for the decision to face the Goths, and they will almost certainly have been supported by Richomeres, especially after Sebastianus had left the West to serve in the East. It is the result of the enquiry that Ammianus uses as the basis of his story.

On the other hand, Zosimus has great sympathy for Sebastianus and gives the opposite viewpoint. Unfortunately, his source is completely unknown, but the likelihood is that it was the ‘underground’ reaction to the official enquiry. Knowing that Victor and his associates would be bound to put the blame on those who had died and were unable to defend themselves, there may have been a large proportion of the population who assumed that the enquiry was a whitewash and that Sebastianus was innocent of the charges laid against him.

On reflection, it is almost certain that Ammianus is giving the true story.¹⁰ Sebastianus did indeed wish to confront the Goths before Gratian arrived from the West. Not only would his own earlier victories be eclipsed by the propaganda surrounding a joint operation between East and West, but also Sebastianus had many reasons not to trust the Western commanders and prevent them being associated in any way with an imperial victory: after all, they had earlier effectively dismissed him during the convoluted events surrounding the death of Valentinian I and the elevation of Valentinian II. Sebastianus would have had no desire to co-operate with those who had ‘illegally’ removed him from command.

Valens himself will also have been keen to lead an army into battle. A victory achieved alone would strengthen his political and military standing, as well as easing the tensions which had recently erupted between himself and the citizens of Constantinople. A victory achieved with the help of the West would doubtless create further tensions in the capital, with claims of cowardice and of being unable to defeat barbarians without external help. Clearly, Valens would want to win the battle on his own, and Ammianus’

claim that he 'didn't want to share the glory' with Gratian is accurate, but fails to acknowledge the political and military necessities of the time.¹¹ Furthermore, Valens had already spent three years of his rule (367–369) campaigning against the Goths without ever being in danger of defeat, so would not be afraid of a battle, and he would also have wanted to confront the Goths whilst their army was not fully gathered and before they could scatter and escape into the countryside, leading to a protracted continuation of the war.¹²

In addition to the political ramifications, militarily the decision to face the Goths made sense. The policy of using manoeuvre and blockade was effective, but was liable to tie down large numbers of Roman troops for a long period of time. Valens, his mind dominated by the threat posed by Persia, will not have wanted to spend time slowly forcing the Goths to negotiate. Since his scouts had reported only 10,000 Gothic troops in the area, and since Valens' troops outnumbered the enemy, it made sense to move against the Goths. His superior forces will have ensured that Valens would not be defeated, always a major fear of any Roman leader. Furthermore, by facing a large proportion of the Goths in strength Valens would almost certainly be able to force matters to a conclusion, either in battle or by forcing the Goths to negotiate. Either way, the Goths as a whole would be seriously weakened by the elimination of such a large proportion of their fighting men.¹³

As noted above, the information given by Ammianus was probably derived from official investigations into the outcome of the battle. The bias of the witnesses in the enquiry means that, contrary to their evidence, there is the possibility that even at this time Valens had not fully committed to attacking the Goths. When Valens left Adrianople part of his plan may have been simply to confront the Goths. This would pin the Goths to the north of Adrianople. It had taken them three days to traverse the passes to the north and Valens – or at least some of his advisors – will have realized that if faced by the full might of the army the Goths would be unable to leave their camp: an attempt to escape to the vicinity of Nice would expose them to an attack on their flank, whereas a slow march back over the passes through which they had just come would leave their rear vulnerable. By advancing on the Gothic position Valens had isolated the Goths, who would now face either starvation or battle, and Valens would still have the option of awaiting the arrival of Gratian and the Western army. However the most likely outcome was that the Goths would be prepared to negotiate.

There is one further point to be made, which is not expanded upon by any of the ancient sources. Although it is clear from Ammianus' account that the Goths were aiming to converge on Nice in order to cut Valens' supply lines, the need to maintain his communications is nowhere mentioned in Valens' decision to advance towards the Goths. Although he had been advised to wait, it was possible that such prevarication could be taken by the Goths as a sign of weakness, encouraging them to continue on to Nice and cut Valens' lines

with his capital. This would not only be dangerous for Valens in losing him support in Constantinople, strategically it would allow Fritigern to seize the initiative, reducing Valens' options.

The one aspect of Valens' rule that the episode does highlight is the deep political and military divisions between the holders of high office at Valens' court, a factor made worse by Valens' expansion of the military bureaucracy, which was 'detrimental to decision making'.¹⁴ Although it is certain that in many respects the opinions given at the council were the deeply felt beliefs of those involved, it is highly likely that at least some of the biases were intensified, if not created, by the personal enmity felt between the leading men – not least between Sebastianus, the new military commander who had recently arrived from the West and immediately been appointed to high command, and Traianus, who had in effect been dismissed to make way for the newcomer. Whatever the nature of the talks, the outcome was not long in coming: Gratian was taking too long and the delay was having a major effect on Valens' reputation.¹⁵ Unsurprisingly, Valens 'spurned [the advice of his] excellent counsellors' and the army was ordered to prepare for battle on the following day.¹⁶

Fritigern's strategy

It is unusual to find any attempt to describe Fritigern's strategy at Adrianople, apart from that described by Ammianus. Although it is usually accepted that Fritigern was attempting to cut Valens' supply lines by advancing to Nice – a manoeuvre interpreted by one modern authority as 'a brilliant move'¹⁷ – it is clear that Valens' arrival at Adrianople and his building of a camp to the north of the city resulted in an impasse.¹⁸ Fritigern was now pinned in the mountains, unwilling to advance to Nice due to the proximity of Valens' army. Although in theory Fritigern could have continued with his original plan, in practice Valens' positioning of the Roman army had stopped this. Should Fritigern advance, Valens' army, unencumbered by noncombatants, could easily outpace him and catch him unprepared. Furthermore, an advance would mean that Fritigern's own retreat would be severed and he would be forced into territory where he did not know the deployment of the enemy or the availability of resources whilst being pursued by the Roman army. Accordingly, Fritigern set up his camp in the hills and sent out messengers to call as many men as could be found to his camp. The hypothesis that all of his manoeuvres were intended to force Valens to fight on 'unfavourable ground' remains possible but is unlikely.¹⁹ Knowing the weakness of his own position, he also sent envoys to meet Valens in order to discuss terms for peace.

Negotiations

As a result, later on the same day that the council had been held (8 August) Valens received a major surprise: an embassy from Fritigern, led by an Arian priest accompanied by 'some humble folk' – possibly lesser chieftains – arrived at Valens' camp.²⁰ According to Ammianus the envoy presented two

letters, one 'open' and one 'private'.²¹ The open letter asked simply for the lands of Thrace and a peace treaty, the same as had been offered when the Goths had crossed the Danube.

Although often accepted at face value, the account given of the second letter contains claims of a more dubious nature. Ammianus states that in this letter Fritigern admitted that he did not have complete control of the Goths and that in order to force his countrymen to accept a treaty the emperor needed to advance until he was near the Goths in order to frighten the tribesmen into accepting the treaty proposed. This is clearly true: Fritigern was not a 'King', merely a 'Judge'. As a result his political control was tenuous, with various tribal chieftains controlling their own forces and only submitting to Fritigern out of necessity in the face of Roman military might.²²

The dubious nature of Ammianus' account arises when he claims that Fritigern was 'skilled in craft and in various forms of deception'.²³ It is unclear why Ammianus believed that Fritigern's offer was deceptive. There can be little doubt that Fritigern recognized that the Goths were effectively cut off from retreat and he was unwilling to face the full might of the Roman army, which had fought the united Goths to a standstill in the war of 367–369. It would appear to all concerned – both Fritigern and Valens – that the Goths would lose, and Fritigern would have realized the futility of losing a large number of his men in a hopeless battle. Undoubtedly Ammianus' account is written in hindsight: Fritigern, the arch deceiver and architect of Valens' fall, must have planned events in advance and acted on an overarching strategy based on leading Valens into making mistakes. Obviously, this is unacceptable. The offer of peace was certainly genuine.²⁴

However, due to their low social status, Valens doubted the envoys' sincerity and they were sent back to Fritigern without an agreement.²⁵ This is understandable: such negotiations would not be concluded on a first meeting. Several rounds of talks would be needed, including the presence of very high-ranking individuals on both sides to ensure the sincerity of the talks.²⁶ However, the arrival of the envoys will have convinced Valens that the decision to confront the Goths was correct: if Fritigern's 'secret' offer of peace was genuine, Valens needed to confront the Goths with a show of force to cow them into submission as requested. The army would march. Unfortunately for Valens, the returning envoys will have seen the army's preparations and so have informed Fritigern that Valens was intending to confront the Goths on the following day. Fritigern immediately sent out more messengers to assemble as many men as possible at his camp: the greater the odds against Valens, the more likely it would be that he would negotiate.

Opening Moves

In accordance with his theories, dawn of 9 November saw Valens lead his men out of their camp, leaving their baggage and unnecessary gear near the walls of the city with an armed guard. They then marched 'with extreme

haste' over rough ground and on a hot day towards the Goths.²⁷ The imperial treasury and insignia were left in the city itself.²⁸ Although the precise location of the battle is unknown, it is sometimes forgotten that Valens knew where the Goths were, knew how far his men would have to march, and either Valens or his more competent commanders would certainly have ensured that before setting out they had breakfasted and were carrying supplies of water in their kit.²⁹

Attempts have been made to locate the site of the battle.³⁰ Unfortunately, these are all based upon Ammianus' account and the vague nature of Ammianus' description means that all of them remain a possibility, although the village of Muratçali in north-western Turkey may be the most likely of those proposed.³¹ Furthermore, the details hypothesized in many of these modern works are based upon the specific topography of the preferred battle site, often with the result that the proposed description of the battle is heavily influenced by the topography of the site and so has to be heavily amended to include all of the information included by Ammianus. As a result, the hypothetical reconstruction which follows is based upon Ammianus, rather than on secondary retellings of the story.

The Romans marched towards the Goths until 'at the eighth hour' (about 2pm) the vanguard came in sight of the Gothic camp, arrayed in a 'perfect circle'.³² Without pause:

The Roman leaders so drew up their line of battle that the cavalry on the right wing were first pushed forward, while the greater part of the infantry waited in reserve. But the left wing of the horsemen (which was formed with the greatest difficulty, since many of them were still scattered along the roads) was hastening to the spot at swift pace.

Ammianus 31.12.11–12

It has been noted by at least one modern historian that Ammianus' claim that the Gothic laager was drawn up in a 'perfect circle' is unlikely to be totally accurate. Calculations have shown that the minimum number of wagons to be expected for an army of this size would be about 15 kilometres long. The result would be a single circle some 2–3 kilometres in length, taking an entire day to form and because of its extreme length being rather vulnerable to attack. It is more likely that the wagons were drawn up in a larger number of smaller circles based on family or tribal groupings.³³ Not only would such a defensive formation be quicker to form, but it would also have resulted in a far stronger camp, with enemies having to take a large number of smaller defensive 'redoubts' whilst constantly being under fire from neighbouring laagers. Furthermore, when it became clear that a laager was about to be overrun, the defenders could flee to neighbouring circles, reinforcing these camps and presenting the enemy with ever-stronger opposition as they progressed further into the defences.

The Negotiations Resume

As the Roman army deployed in front of him, Fritigern made another attempt to negotiate a peace. He sent a second group of envoys, but due to their 'low origin' Valens sent them back. However, he also included a message that 'for a lasting treaty ... suitable chieftains be sent'.³⁴ Despite Ammianus' view to the contrary, Valens was not yet set to fight a battle which would, whatever the outcome, cause further losses to the Eastern army at a time when the Persians were already making inroads into Armenia.³⁵ Peace and the recruiting of Gothic troops into the Eastern army remained essential.

At this point in the text Ammianus allegedly gives an insight into Fritigern's motives, strategy and worries. He claims that Fritigern's tactic was to pretend to sue for peace to give the cavalry under Alatheus and Saphrax – 'which was far away and had been sent for' – time to return.³⁶ The supposition is that Fritigern was intent on fighting and that he was confident of victory, otherwise the attempt to secure peace would not have been described as 'pretended'. The narrative is almost certainly derived from the official inquest. This will have highlighted Fritigern's reasonable desire for his cavalry to return, as well as noting their efficiency during the battle itself. As a result, the claim that Fritigern was simply employing 'delaying tactics' is a spurious one, based on hindsight and the traditional Roman bias against 'untrustworthy' barbarians.³⁷

Indeed, in his next paragraph Ammianus himself suggests that Fritigern's delaying tactics may have actually been an honest attempt to negotiate peace when he states that:

Meanwhile Fritigern, shrewd to foresee the future and fearing the uncertainty of war, on his own initiative sent one of his common soldiers as a herald, requesting that picked men of noble rank be sent to him at once as hostages and saying that he himself would fearlessly meet the threats of his soldiers and do what was necessary.

Ammianus 31.12.14

There can be little doubt that the offer was genuine. Fritigern knew that the chances of the Goths defeating the Roman army were slim and that a peace treaty signed on the original terms was the best that he could hope for in the circumstances. Doubtless he was also aware that Valens did not want to fight a battle and was intent on returning east to face Shapur. Working on Valens' insecurities and desires, Fritigern stood a good chance of obtaining the terms he needed. This is proved by the next entry by Ammianus:

The proposal of the dreaded leader was welcome and approved, and the tribune Aequitius [Equitius], then marshal of the court *cura palatii* and a relative of Valens, with the general consent was chosen to go speedily as a surety. When he [Equitius] objected, on the ground that he had once been captured by enemy but had escaped

from Dibaltum, and therefore feared their unreasonable anger, Richomeres voluntarily offered his own services and gladly promised to go, thinking this also to be a fine act and worthy of a brave man. And soon he was on his way [bringing] proofs of his rank and birth.

Ammianus 31.12.15

It was looking increasingly likely that a treaty would be signed rather than a battle be fought. This did not mean, however, that the Goths had relaxed their vigilance or had accepted that there would not be a battle. According to Ammianus, they took care to make the Roman troops' stay on the battlefield as unpleasant as possible:

Meanwhile the enemy purposely delayed, in order that during the pretended truce their cavalry might return, who, they hoped, would soon make their appearance; also that our soldiers might be exposed to the fiery summer heat and exhausted by their dry throats, while the broad plains gleamed with fires, which the enemy were feeding with wood and dry fuel, for this same purpose. To that evil was added another deadly one, namely, that men and beasts were tormented by severe hunger.

Ammianus 31.12.13

Again Ammianus returns to the theme of Gothic delay to allow their cavalry to return. Although there is doubtless truth in the assertion – after all, if they were going to be forced by the Romans to fight they would want all available troops at the battlefield – the emphasis Ammianus places on the theme is almost certainly affected by hindsight: he knew what effect the Gothic cavalry was going to have on the battlefield and so claims that their return was a central part of Fritigern's strategy. In addition, the way the story is told helps to maintain tension in the account. Yet in reality the theme of delay may not have had the importance accorded by Ammianus.

In addition, the claim that the Goths had lit fires and were making smoke in order to further weaken the Roman forces is a little far-fetched. The use of such devices is relatively uncommon for the simple reason that they are subject to the wind, which can easily change direction and cause the smoke to blow into the faces of friendly troops.³⁸ It is far more likely that the smoke blowing over the Roman forces came from Gothic camp fires and possibly from nearby burning fields that had been set alight by the Goths after they had been plundered. Yet it should be acknowledged as possible that some of the Goths saw the wind blowing the smoke towards the Romans and stoked nearby fires in order to increase the amount of smoke. This has been expanded by Ammianus to highlight the plight of the Roman army and highlight the obnoxious and deceitful nature of Fritigern and the Goths.

Richomeres set out for the Gothic lines in order to act as a hostage, but

never reached them. Before Fritigern's plans could come to fruition, or Valens' hopes of peace be fulfilled, actions on the battlefield halted all attempts at negotiations. The battle would start without either commander giving the order.

The Opposing Armies

Many attempts have been made to estimate the number and types of troops available to the Goths and Romans. Unfortunately, these are usually based either on the inflated numbers given by the ancient authors or are estimated based upon the trends prevalent at the time. The only figure given by Ammianus is when the scouts returned to Valens and reported 'through some mistake or other' that the Goths numbered only 10,000 men.³⁹ Disappointingly, Ammianus does not give a 'correct' figure.

The 'Goths'

The first question is whether Ammianus' account is reliable numerically. Unfortunately, this is completely unknown and so modern historians have had to use '10,000' as an approximate number and calculate from that. There is every chance that the number given is reasonably accurate – at the most possibly somewhere around 12,000–15,000 men – but relates solely to the forces under the command of Fritigern and does not include the Greuthungi, the Alans or the Huns.⁴⁰ Estimates for the latter three troops vary, but a recent study suggested that the Greuthungi may have numbered the same as the Tervingi, with the numbers of Alans and Huns probably being very small, as they 'tended to operate in small, politically independent groups'.⁴¹

An alternative estimate has the Greuthungian cavalry numbering in the region of 3,000–4,000.⁴² However, it should be remembered that these hypotheses are based upon modern estimates concerning the number of troops that could be supported by foraging for long periods of time on hostile Roman territory and could be completely wrong. If they are anywhere near to being accurate, the 'Goths' will have numbered somewhere between 15,000–25,000 men at Adrianople.⁴³

The basic infantry of the Tervingi was doubtless the spearman, armed with a simple spear suitable either for throwing or stabbing and which could be used either underarm or over-arm by both the cavalry and infantry. The spears were c.2.5 to 3.5 metres in length with a variety of metal heads fixed to the top of the shaft.⁴⁴ The sword used by the Germans was their own version of the *spatha*, the long, double-edged sword which varied from between 0.7 to 0.9 metres in length.⁴⁵ Unfortunately, although the German smiths were adept at making these weapons, the results were expensive and so restricted their distribution among the poorer classes of warrior. Alongside and supporting the spearmen were an unknown proportion of archers. These are usually dismissed as being a very small percentage of the total force, though it should be noted that Vegetius implies that there were a large number of archers amongst the Goths.⁴⁶

As already noted, the cavalry was armed with the same style of spear as the infantry, although the richer, noble cavalry were far more likely to have a sword than their infantry counterpart. Alongside the basic spear-armed cavalry were a small number of Huns and Alans. Although possibly only numbering in the hundreds, these men were possibly armed with short spears, but definitely with swords and – most importantly – bows. The Huns were later famous for their ability to close to short range and fire their powerful asymmetrical bows with extreme accuracy before retiring out of harm's way.⁴⁷ Their speed and manoeuvrability made them especially useful against unformed and outflanked troops.

Only the richer cavalry will have been able to afford body armour, which will have been of the ring mail style prevalent throughout this period. However, it should be noted that during the rebellion the Goths had defeated several Roman 'armies' and had looted the bodies of their enemies, removing any armour and weapons found. This will have included damaged armour, since to an unarmoured infantryman any armour may be preferable to none.

The Romans

The number of Roman troops present at Adrianople is also a matter of guesswork based upon ancient sources and modern theories of logistics. All that can be said with any certainty is that Valens' army must have been substantially more than 10,000 in order for him to believe that he could win an easy victory.⁴⁸

Ammianus himself names only a few units as being present at the battle. These are the Lanciarii, the Mattiari, Batavi, Scutarii and Sagittarii. Of these the 'Scutarii' may have been 'Guard Cavalry' and the 'Sagittarii' horse-archers, whilst the other troops are almost certainly infantry units.⁴⁹

Attempts have been made to estimate the strength of the Roman forces at Adrianople but all of these are based upon estimates of unit size and the units listed in the later *Notitia Dignitatum*.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, although these hypotheses accept that the *Notitia* may not give an accurate list of units, and there are major difficulties in projecting the information back in time, they are still used to estimate Roman strength at the battle.

Sadly, these attempts are probably futile and result in nothing stronger than educated guesswork. This is clearly shown when the problems of using the *Notitia* in this manner are understood. For example, there are units listed in the *Notitia* as being stationed at two or more locations at the same time. In addition, these analyses may fail to take into account that many Roman units will have suffered heavy losses during the battle, and as a result either been disbanded or merged into new units, either retaining only one of the names of the merged units or being renamed, so hiding their origin. Moreover, after the battle units were transferred from other parts of the empire, especially Egypt, and so although listed in the *Notitia* as being in the Balkans were not there at the time of the battle. Finally, there remains the problem of dating the

formation of new units to replace the losses sustained in the battle. These are usually identified by using their names or epithets to link them to individual emperors, so narrowing the date of their inception. This does not take into account the possibility that old units were renamed by emperors for, say, loyalty or bravery in battle. As a result, these discrepancies mean that using the *Notitia* to estimate the units present at the battle is questionable.

Once the *Notitia* has been used to estimate the units present, the number of units is sometimes multiplied by the estimated number of men per unit to reach a total force for Valens' army. As with the previous hypotheses, this also is highly speculative. As shown in previous chapters Valens was faced with a continuing shortage of troops, especially as many had been left in the East to guard the frontier with Persia, maintain a close watch on Mavia, and police the areas affected by the Isaurian 'rebellion'. Moreover the Thracian army had been decimated in the battles of Marcianople and Ad Salices, as a result of which its effectiveness was questionable and many may have deserted rather than face a third battle. It is possible that the Thracian 'field army' was now used for little other than garrison duties in the Balkans. In addition, Valens was still faced with ongoing problems of recruiting troops, so many units were probably very under strength.

As a result of the ongoing troop shortages Valens was forced to supplement his forces with a variety of 'ethnic' units recruited from outside the Empire. These included Armenians under Barzimeres, Iberians under Bacurius, Saracens, 'Celts', Libyans and troops 'from the Tigris' (Assyrians).⁵¹ Again, the difficulty lies in deciding whether these units were cavalry or infantry, and of estimating the numerical strength of these forces. Having no practical way of determining either of these problems with any accuracy, these questions also remain unanswered.

It has also been suggested that there may have been a large number of recently recruited Goths serving in the army. Although a possibility, the fact that Valens ordered the Gothic troops of Sueridus and Colias to leave for Asia Minor suggests that Valens was unwilling to leave Gothic troops to face their countrymen, so it is probably best to discount the hypothesis.⁵²

With the possibility that many of the units assumed to be at the battle may have either been greatly under strength, or absent on garrison duties, and that Valens' force was supplemented by a variety of 'allied' units of unknown composition, the problem of estimating the size of the Roman army at the battle becomes ever more convoluted and difficult.

Yet such an estimate is needed if an analysis of the battle and its after-effects is going to be attempted. Dealing specifically with numbers rather than 'units', it is clear that Valens outnumbered the reported 10,000 men of Fritigern, but not by enough to convince him to join battle without delay. Therefore estimates as high as 30,000 men are probably to be discounted.⁵³ It is more likely that the Roman Army numbered approximately 15,000–20,000 men. This would both account for Valens' willingness to join battle, and also

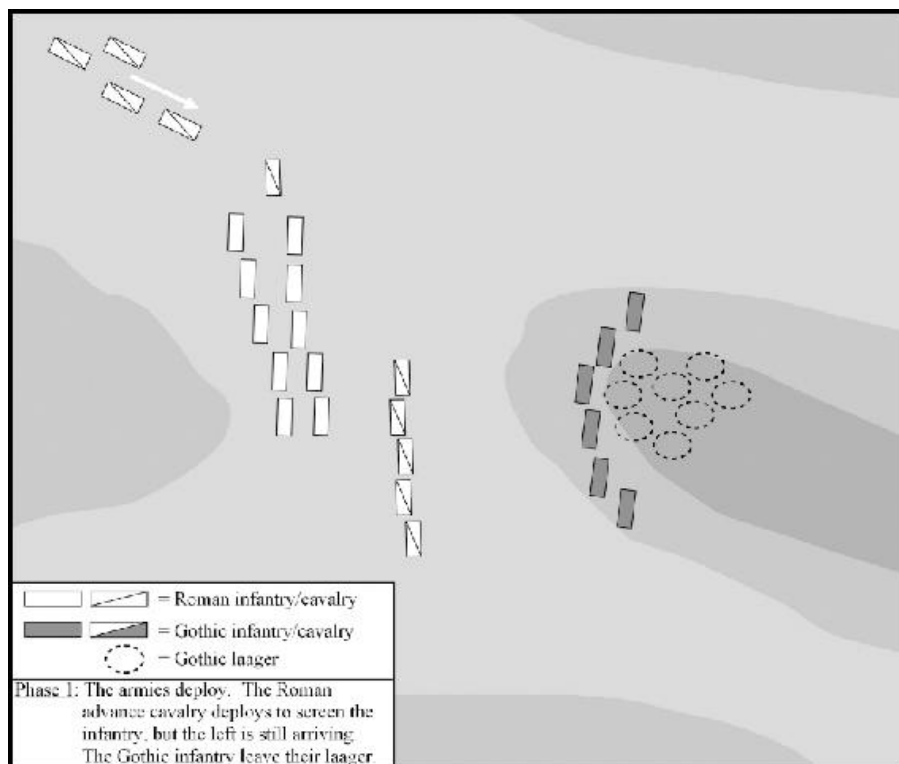
for the events surrounding the return of the Gothic cavalry under Alatheus and Saphrax.⁵⁴

Like their Gothic enemies, the Roman troops now tended to be armed largely with spears of roughly the same dimensions as the Goths. However, the Romans retained their logistical advantage, resulting in the majority of their troops being equipped with both armour and swords. The Romans also had light troops armed with bows, slings, staff slings and possibly crossbows.

A good proportion – usually believed to be around 30 per cent – of the army would be cavalry. The majority of these would be simple cavalry armed with spear and sword and defended by metal body armour and shield. Yet the Roman army also had units of horse archers similar to the Huns and the Alans, as well as very heavily armoured cavalry, where both the horses and the men were protected by ring mail armour, although in the case of the horses this may have been made of leather or cloth. Called *catafractarii* or *clibanarii* in the ancient sources, these men were extremely effective shock troops in the right circumstances. Unfortunately, despite modern attempts to clarify which troops were present on the battlefield, and whether any of these ‘shock’ cavalymen were present, the truth is that we simply do not know. They may have accompanied Valens to the Balkans, but it is just as likely that they were left on the Eastern frontier to guard against a Persian attack, being thought by Valens to be more effective at countering the highly mobile Persian armies than Roman infantry and less effective at facing the Goths in the mountain passes of the Balkans.

The Battle of Adrianople

The account of the conflict given by Ammianus is the only known detailed version of the battle. Unfortunately, his description follows traditional Roman literary styles rather than being a modern description of a battle. As a result, much confusion has arisen concerning the different phases of the battle and many different reconstructions have been attempted. However, a close reading of Ammianus does much to dispel the accumulated ‘myths’ that have emerged.



Adrianople Phase 1. The Armies Deploy.

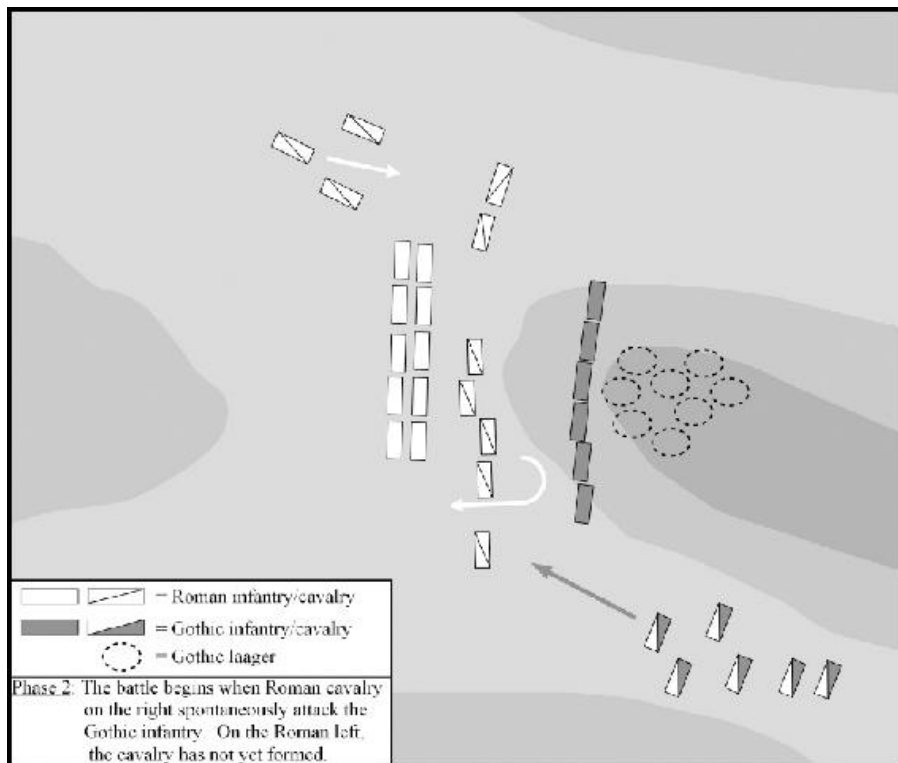
As already noted, Roman preparations began with the cavalry on the right wing being deployed first and moving to screen the infantry as they in turn deployed. From information given by Ammianus later in his account it is certain that the infantry followed tradition by deploying in two lines.⁵⁵ On the left, the Roman cavalry were late in arriving and slowly began to fan out to cover the left flank.⁵⁶

For their part, the Goths left the safety of their wagon laager and formed up in front of the laager opposite the Romans.⁵⁷

Richomeres had already begun his journey to the Gothic camp and the Roman deployment was not yet completed when:⁵⁸

As he [Richomeres] was on his way to the enemy's rampart, the archers (*sagittarii*) and the targeteers (*scutarii*), then under the command of one Bacurius of Hiberia [Caucasian Iberia] and Cassio, had rushed forward too eagerly in hot attack, and were already engaged with their adversaries; and as their charge had been untimely, so their retreat was cowardly; and thus they gave an unfavourable omen to the beginning of the battle.

Ammianus 31.12.16



Adrianople Phase 2. The Battle Begins.

This was without doubt dreadful news to Valens. Arriving on the battlefield he had received the envoys from Fritigern and an agreement had been reached for negotiations to begin. Not only had the potential for peace now been nullified, but many of the Roman high command had probably remained with Valens to debate the details of a treaty. Although only Equitius and Richomeres are specifically named by Ammianus as being with Valens, it is likely that most – if not all – of the other *magistri* were also still with the emperor: their presence would not be needed during the deployment process, which would be supervised by their subordinates following traditional Roman methods. In addition, they would need to remain together to determine what tactics they should use in case a battle was to be fought. Their absence would cause many problems for the Romans as the battle began.

Unfortunately, Ammianus does not specifically name the two units, nor does he state why they began the battle. The chances are that the ‘*scutarii*’ are one of the elite *schola* (guard) cavalry units and the ‘*sagittarii*’ may be a unit of horse archers, since the right-wing cavalry had deployed at the front of the infantry and so would be the first to make contact.⁵⁹ It has been suggested that they had been attempting to gain access to the high ground on the left of the battlefield in order to see what lay beyond the ridge and that in doing so they became embroiled with enemy infantry and, being skirmishers and

unsupported cavalry, they were easily repulsed.⁶⁰ The hypothesis has some merit: unsupported cavalry would always be vulnerable to attack by formed infantry that were facing the cavalry to their front. Unfortunately, the suggestion that the Roman cavalry had drifted to the left is not supported in the sources and is based upon assumptions concerning the proposed battlefield location and events later in the battle.⁶¹ As a result, it is probably safer to assume that the battle began on the right wing, and this theory will be followed throughout the rest of the account.

At this point Ammianus' description turns to the arrival of the enemy cavalry:

The Gothic cavalry, returning with Alatheus and Saphrax, combined with a band of the Halani (Alans), dashed out as a thunderbolt does near high mountains, and threw into confusion all those whom they could find in the way of their swift onslaught, and quickly slew them.

Ammianus 31.12.17

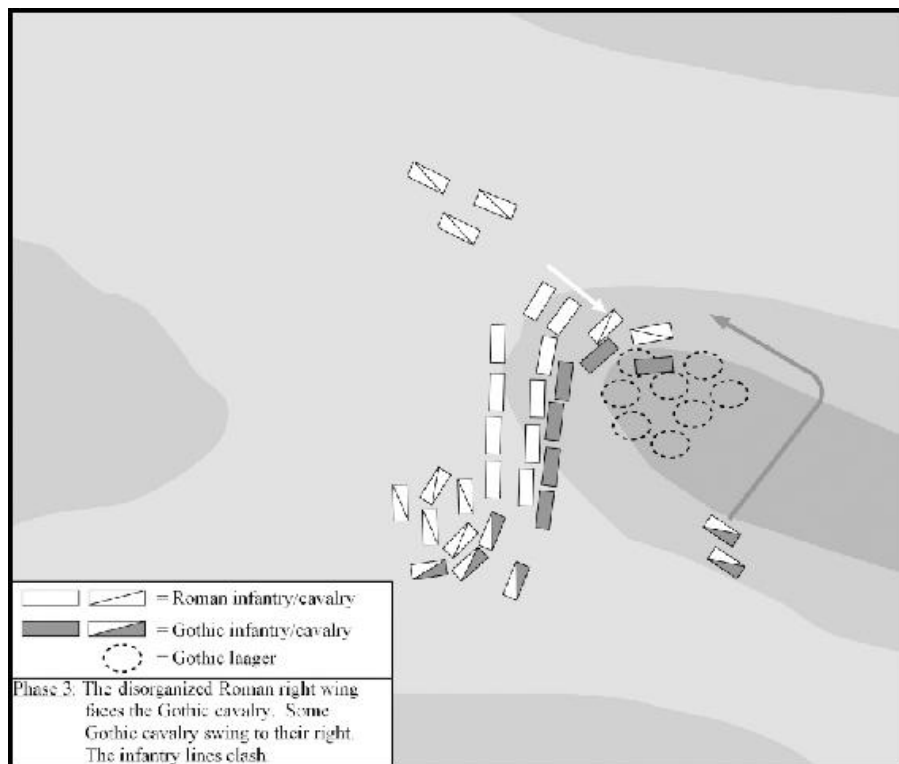
This is usually interpreted by modern commentators as being a surprise assault by the fresh and fully formed cavalry under Alatheus and Saphrax, who had returned at precisely the right time to attack the disorganized Romans. This does not quite ring true. Although it is clear that the cavalry's timing was good, it would be surprising if the Gothic cavalry, strung out over the roads to the rear of the Gothic camp, had been able to form up so quickly in order to deliver a co-ordinated charge. In direct comparison, Ammianus states that the Roman left wing took a long time to deploy, so it is likely that the Gothic cavalry would also take time to deploy, which is nowhere attested.

It is also a common interpretation that the Gothic cavalry arrived on their right flank, opposite the Roman left.⁶² This would appear to be extremely unlikely. Later in the commentary Ammianus describes the left wing of the Romans making great headway against the enemy. This would be impossible if that flank had been surprised by the attack of a large force of enemy cavalry.

As a result, it is more likely that the Gothic cavalry first arrived on the Romans' right flank. Their sudden appearance gives an extra reason for the flight of the *scutarii* and *sagittarii*, and the fact that the Goths did not have time to organize their deployment explains what happens next in Ammianus' narrative, as, despite being taken by surprise: 'our soldiers who were giving way rallied, exchanging many encouraging shouts'.⁶³

Although the Roman right had been taken by surprise, the disorganized attack by the Gothic cavalry did not immediately cause a mass panic in the Roman lines. Unfortunately, many of the cavalry were pinned by enemy infantry, and so were unable to deploy to face the surprise attack. As a result, the Roman right-wing cavalry began to be outflanked by the Goths, and at this point it is certain that the Alan and Hun horse-archers were able to take a

terrible toll: ‘But the battle, spreading like flames, filled their hearts with terror, as numbers of them were pierced by strokes of whirling spears and arrows.’⁶⁴ Without a superior commander to organize the defence – since the senior officers had probably remained with Valens (see above) – the morale of the Roman right flank began to crumble.



Adrianople Phase 3. The Infantry Clash.

With the right wing wavering, at this point the two infantry lines clashed in the centre of the battle, taking on the usual ebb and flow as the two sides attempted to break the enemy’s line: ‘Then the lines dashed together like beaked ships, pushing each other back and forth in turn, and tossed about by alternate movements, like waves at sea’.⁶⁵ Faced with a traditional conflict in the centre, the lack of a superior commander was not felt as strongly here as it was on the right flank.

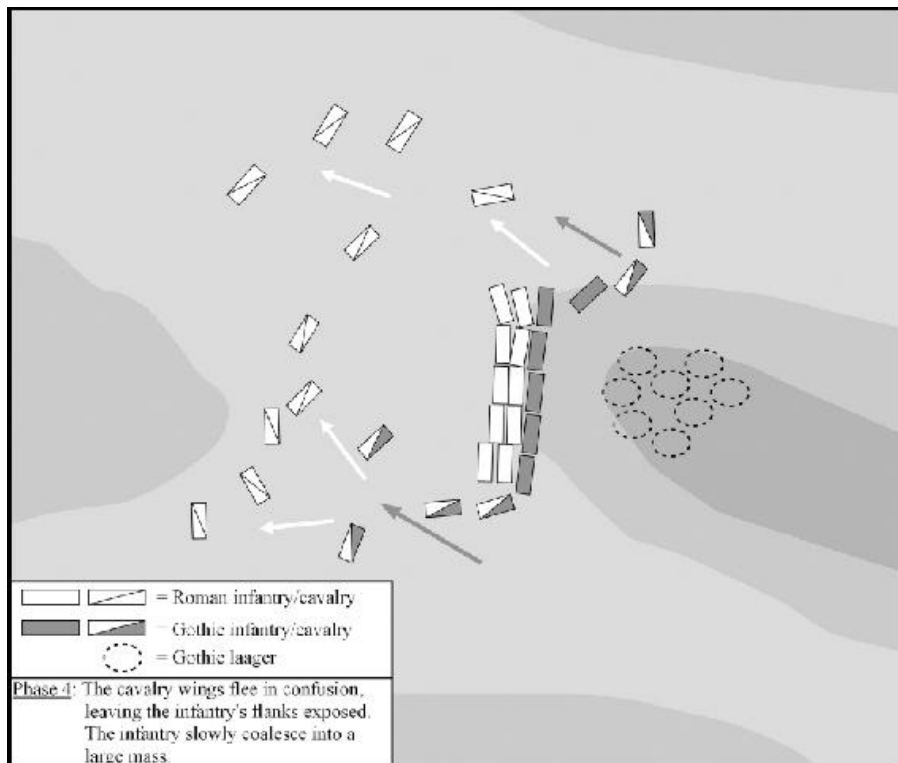
Ammianus now turns his attention to the other side of the battlefield, where: ‘the left wing ... had made its way as far as the very wagons, and would have gone farther if it had had any support’.⁶⁶ It is clear that at this point those elements of the left wing cavalry which had had time to deploy had attacked and forced the right flank of the Goths back to their camp.

Unfortunately, the attack now collapsed: ‘being deserted by the rest of the cavalry, [the left wing] was hard pressed by the enemy’s numbers, [and] was

crushed, and overwhelmed, as if by the downfall of a mighty rampart'.⁶⁷ Although usually ignored, the fact that Ammianus uses the phrase '*deserted by the rest of the cavalry*' here, and only in the next section turns his attention to the infantry, implies that the successful attack was made only by part of the left wing cavalry, without the support of either the remainder of the cavalry or the infantry. As with the right wing, the lack of a senior commander to organize and time the attack resulted in local commanders making the mistake of attacking before the whole weight of the left wing could be organized for the assault.

Despite missing a large proportion of the Roman left, it is probable that the cavalry attacked the outflanked the enemy infantry, and in these circumstances it is understandable that the Gothic infantry retreated to the protection of their laager. Once halted by the obstacle of a formed laager it is unsurprising that the attacking forces were defeated. Not only did the enemy have greater numbers, but cavalry attacking 'fortifications' in the form of a well-defended wagon laager were doomed to suffer a high number of casualties and be repulsed.

Ammianus does not explain why the rest of the cavalry failed to support their colleagues. There are at least three possible explanations for this. One is that at this stage they still hadn't been able to deploy fully in order to advance on the enemy in an organized fashion. Another is that some of the Gothic cavalry had by now made their way to their own right flank and the uncommitted Roman cavalry knew that to support their comrades in the attack on the laager would not only be futile but expose their flanks to a Gothic counter-attack. Possibly more likely is the third; that it was a combination of these two factors that inhibited the rest of the cavalry from attacking, coupled with the absence of a senior commander to organize the attack. Unfortunately, unless some new documentary material comes to light, the truth will never be known.



Adrianople Phase 4. The Roman Cavalry Retire.

Whatever the case, from Ammianus' description it is certain that the cavalry on the left wing now left the field, leaving the flank of the infantry open to attack. Similarly, on the right wing too the cavalry appear to have finally given way and left the field, meaning that the right flank of the infantry was also unguarded. This interpretation is reinforced by the accounts given by Sozomen, Jerome and Socrates.⁶⁸

In these circumstances, the infantry acted as all threatened people act, and they drew closer together; 'The foot-soldiers thus stood unprotected, and their companies were so crowded together that hardly anyone could pull out his sword or draw back his arm.'⁶⁹ It is at this point that the outcome of the battle was determined. To wield their weapons efficiently the Romans, like most other troops, needed space in which to manoeuvre their swords to attack the enemy and to move their bodies in order to evade attack. This had been proven in many battles in the past, especially at Cannae in the third-century BC where Hannibal had surrounded the Roman legions and crushed them into a small space where they could not fight effectively and so perished.

Yet at this point the Roman troops showed that they were as steadfast as their ancestors:

But when the barbarians, pouring forth in huge hordes, trampled down horse and man, and in the press of ranks no room for retreat

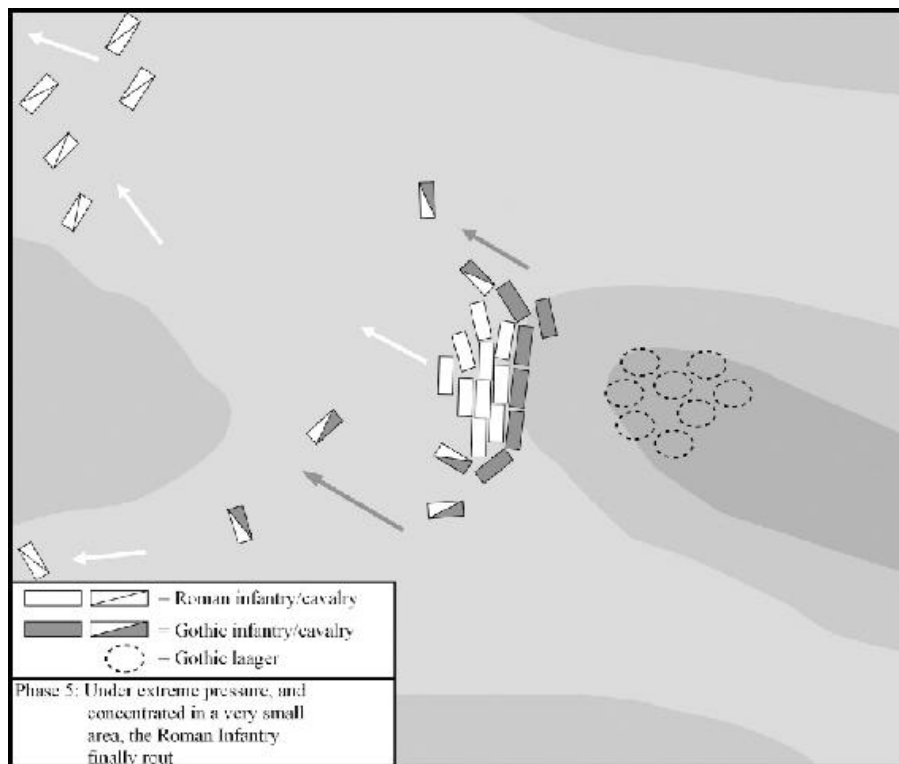
could be gained anywhere, and the increased crowding left no opportunity for escape, our soldiers also, showing extreme contempt of falling in the fight, received their death-blows, yet struck down their assailants’.

Ammianus 31.12.3

Despite their bravery, slowly the troops began to lose their will to fight:

In this great tumult and confusion the infantry, exhausted by their efforts and the danger, when in turn strength and mind for planning anything were lacking, their lances for the most part broken by constant clashing, content to fight with drawn swords, plunged into the dense masses of the foe, regardless of their lives, seeing all around that every loophole of escape was lost. The ground covered with streams of blood whirled their slippery foothold from under them, so they could only strain every nerve to sell their lives dearly; and they opposed the onrushing foe with such great resolution that some fell by the weapons of their own comrades. Finally, when the whole scene was discoloured with the hue of dark blood, and wherever men turned their eyes heaps of slain met them, they trod upon the bodies of the dead without mercy.

Ammianus 31.13.5–6



Finally, pushed beyond endurance, the morale of the infantry collapsed:

Now the sun had risen higher, and when it had finished its course through Leo, and was passing into the house of the heavenly Virgo, scorched the Romans, who were more and more exhausted by hunger and worn out by thirst, as well as distressed by the heavy burden of their armour. Finally our line was broken by the onrushing weight of the barbarians, and since that was the only resort in their last extremity, they took to their heels in disorder as best they could.

Ammianus 31.13.7

The fighting was not yet over. Although some modern commentators have disparaged the fighting ability of the Later Roman Army, Ammianus gives ample evidence that some at least were still willing to fight to defend themselves if necessary:

And so the barbarians, their eyes blazing with frenzy, were pursuing our men, in whose veins the blood was chilled with numb horror: some fell without knowing who struck them down, others were buried beneath the mere weight of their assailants; some were slain by the sword of a comrade; for though they often rallied, there was no ground given, nor did anyone spare those who retreated.

Ammianus 31.13.10

Finally, the coming of night put an end to the battle.⁷⁰ According to Ammianus ‘barely a third part of our army escaped’ and the local roads were blocked by the bodies of the fallen.⁷¹ Included amongst the slain were ‘Traianus and Sebastianus ... thirty-five tribunes without special assignments ... leaders of bodies of troops (*numerorum rectores*), as well as Valerianus and Aequitius [Equitius], the one having charge of the stables, the other, of the Palace. Among these also Potentius lost his life in the first flower of his youth; he was tribune of the Promoti, respected by all good men and honoured both for his own services and those of his father Ursicinus, formerly a commander-in-chief (magister)’.⁷² The loss of so many senior commanders would have serious repercussions for the East.

Valens himself remained on the battlefield. As the battle-line collapsed he: ‘hedged about by dire terrors, and slowly treading over heaps of corpses, took refuge with the lancers [*Lanciarii*] and the mattiarii [Mattiari]’.⁷³ These had remained firm in the face of increasing Gothic pressure. Other commanders were also attempting to find refuge with steady troops, and Traianus, ‘On seeing him [Valens] cried that all hope was gone, unless the emperor, abandoned by his body-guard, should at least be protected by his ... auxiliaries [auxilia].’⁷⁴

In the same area was Victor, who also heard the shout, and ‘hastened to bring quickly to the emperor’s aid the *Batavi*, who had been posted not far off as a reserve force’. However Victor’s loyalties had their limit: ‘When he could find none of them, he retired and went away. And in the same way Richomeres and Saturninus made their escape from danger.’⁷⁵ It is interesting to note that the three surviving generals who may have given evidence at an enquiry all gave a similar account of their survival.

Slowly deserted by his generals, Valens’ end is unknown. There are two variations on his fate as given by the sources. One is that Valens was killed – possibly by an arrow – during the last stages of the battle.⁷⁶ The other is that he was wounded by the arrow and taken to a nearby peasant’s cottage. Here he was surrounded by the enemy who, unaware of his presence and being prevented from entering by a stout defence, set fire to the house, killing Valens and all of the other inhabitants except for one bodyguard. He escaped through a window and, when captured, told the Goths what had happened. Later he escaped from Gothic captivity and told his story to the Romans.⁷⁷

Aftermath and Conclusion

Events after the Battle

In the shock of defeat the East was in a desperate situation: not only had the emperor been killed, but most of the top-ranking generals had also lost their lives. In the confusion, and thanks to the loss of effective political and military control, the East turned to Gratian, the senior emperor, for help and advice.

Gratian did not instantly appoint a successor to Valens. He had many possible candidates for the post, from both the Western half of the empire as well as from amongst the Eastern survivors of the battle. The reason for his caution is unknown. It may be that he was unwilling to appoint one of his own military men because none of them wanted the responsibility, or maybe it was simply because there was a lot of political infighting between his commanders as to who should take over in the East, and in order to maintain the delicate balance he had achieved since the acclamation of his brother Valentinian in 375 he was unable to choose between the proposed candidates. As for the eastern contenders, not only had they just suffered a traumatic defeat in battle, but Gratian would not have known any of them well enough to have trusted them to rule the East effectively.

Possibly as a temporary solution, Gratian decided to recall one of the West's generals from his self-imposed retirement. This would mean that the imperial court would remain in balance, as well as giving the East the competent and confident leadership so desperately needed.¹ Consequently, a message was sent to Theodosius the Younger, the son of *comes* Theodosius who was executed in 375/376, to leave his estates in Spain and return to imperial service.

When Theodosius arrived at court he was immediately given command of the Western troops in Illyricum, possibly also being given the post of *magister militum*. His arrival was opportune, as news of the catastrophic defeat had spread and the barbarian tribes along the frontier were attempting to take advantage of Roman weakness. Theodosius' first action was not against the Goths, but against the Sarmatians, who had again crossed the Danube. Theodosius won a speedy victory over the Sarmatians, proving to Gratian at least that he had the military ability to rule in the East.

In a swift ceremony at Sirmium, on 19 January 379 Theodosius was proclaimed Emperor of the East.² Realizing that affairs in the Balkans were out of control and that only the defences of the Julian Alps were holding the barbarians from Italy itself, Gratian decided to allocate the whole of Illyricum,

as well as the East, to Theodosius. Hopefully, a single command in the war against the Goths, rather than having a Western commander in Illyricum and an Eastern commander for the rest of the Balkans, would give the unified command needed to ensure a swift victory. As Theodosius left for his new command, Gratian continued the campaign against the Sarmatians.

Over the next three years Theodosius fought campaigns against the Goths with varying success, until in 382 a treaty was agreed wherein the Goths received the land that they craved in return for military service in Roman armies. Although in theory the crisis was over, later events once more turned many of the settled Goths into the enemies of Rome, and they wandered the empire before settling in Gaul and founding their own kingdom. Coincidentally, in the same year of 382, Valentinian I was buried, not in the West, but at Constantinople.³ As a son of the East, it was fitting that he be buried in the capital of the East.

Gratian continued to rule until in 383 his behaviour encouraged the revolt of Magnus Maximus in Britain. Gratian was killed and Maximus assumed control of Gaul, Spain and Britain. In 389 he invaded Italy, still ruled by Valentinian II, instigating an East-West civil war that resulted in his own overthrow at the hands of the Eastern army under Theodosius.

Although Valentinian II was restored to the Western throne, his rule did not last long. Faced with the overbearing contempt of Arbogast, the general appointed by Theodosius to support the young emperor, Valentinian was either killed or committed suicide in 392. After a short interval, in August 392 Arbogast declared that Eugenius, a Roman official, was now emperor of the West.

Unable to bear the slight to his position as senior Roman emperor, in 394 Theodosius again led the Eastern armies against the West in civil war. As in the earlier contest, the eastern armies proved victorious and after defeating the Western forces in a costly battle at the River Frigidus, Theodosius installed his younger son Honorius as Emperor of the West – his elder son Arcadius was already co-emperor in the East – and appointed the military commander Stilicho as Honorius' guardian. However, shortly afterwards, on 17 January 395, Theodosius died, setting the scene for the permanent division of the empire.

Aftermath

For many years the Battle of Adrianople was seen as the dividing line between the healthy empire of the fourth century and the collapse of the West in the fifth century, but in reality the importance of the battle is unclear. Much recent analysis has demonstrated that this is too simplistic an approach and that although the battle was a major defeat it had little effect on the 'Fall of the West', largely because the casualties fell on the Eastern Army, whereas it was the Western Empire that fell, with the Eastern half continuing for another thousand years.

All of these accounts apparently fail to accept several salient points. The first of these is that the Goths were ‘elevated ... from being one of many enemy tribes along the frontier to an ever-present threat within the empire itself’.⁴ As a result, when the Goths – the equivalent of one of the Roman ‘field armies’ – moved West they disrupted the social, political and economic fabric of the Western Empire, leaving the West perilously exposed to both internal and external enemies. Their continual presence changed the way in which the Romans dealt with ‘barbarians’, resulting in greater pressures along the borders, which were now more vulnerable to attack thanks to the need for the West to maintain an army facing the threat from the Goths.

Another point sometimes overlooked is that the East faced one major power, the stable and politically united Persians along its eastern border. Therefore, the East was not subjected to large numbers of unpredictable attacks on this border, and although such raids remained a constant menace to the East from across the Danube, the Walls of Constantinople ensured that Asia Minor, the economic and political heartland of the East, remained safe and secure from attack. As a result, when the East was again led by strong military emperors they had an adequate supply of the economic and military resources needed to defeat the barbarians. In contrast, the West’s economic bases were now continually under threat, leading to political and military confusion, which, when coupled with an economic collapse – especially in the mid-late fifth-century – ended the Western Empire.

Finally, the appointment of Theodosius as emperor shortly after Adrianople ensured that the East retained a firm hand on government at the time of crisis. In contrast, the West was quickly ravaged by two civil wars, in both of which the intervention of Theodosius and the Eastern army caused huge losses to the West from which it could never recover.

Another aspect that has recently undergone revision is the early concept that the battle marked the watershed between the infantry armies of the empire and the cavalry armies of the middle ages. This has also been disproved, largely because it is now clear that the battle was fought between two infantry armies, with cavalry playing an important but unplanned role in the battle, rather than being the decisive arm.

Yet the mystique of the battle has proved tenacious, so much so that even a modern authority on the period has claimed that if Valens had been given Illyricum and Macedonia on Valentinian’s death he would not have accepted the Goths, as he would have had readily available manpower and so not have needed Gothic recruits.⁵ Even here the catastrophic nature of the defeat at Adrianople is still such that negating the rebellion of the Tervingi by refusing them entry to the empire is the main criterion for success, despite the fact that the outcome of a refusal to accept the Tervingi’s pleas for asylum is unknown.

Valentinian and Valens

The two extracts below amply demonstrate the attitudes of contemporaries,

and hence modern, authors towards Valentinian and Valens.

Valentinian in another time would have been an exceptional emperor and was similar to Aurelian in his behaviour, except that his undue strictness and a certain frugality were interpreted as cruelty and greed.

Jer. Chron. s.a. 365

[Valens] was immoderately desirous of great wealth, and impatient of toil, rather affecting awesome austerity than possessing it, and somewhat inclined to cruelty; he had rather an uncultivated mind, and was trained neither in the art of war nor in liberal studies; he was ready to gain advantage and profit at the expense of others' suffering, and more intolerable when he attributed offences that were committed to contempt of, or injury to, the imperial dignity; then he vented his rage in bloodshed, and on the ruin of the rich.

Ammianus 31.14.5

The legacy of many Roman emperors is defined by a single event, or series of events. For example, for Trajan (98–117) it is his conquests, for Marcus Aurelius (161–180) the survival of his *Meditations*, and for Constantine (306–337) it is his 'adoption' of Christianity. Valentinian's reputation is secured by the fact that he conducted several successful wars in the West and was the 'last' Roman Emperor to personally lead an army across the Rhine.

On the surface Valentinian was undoubtedly a 'successful' emperor: he defeated external enemies in Gaul, Germania, Britain, Africa and Illyricum. He oversaw the reconstruction of the defences along the Rhine and in Britain. When he died the West was in as strong a position as it had been at any time in the previous century – so much so that upon his death there were no major barbarian invasions across the northern borders, as was too often the case in the history of the empire.

On the other hand, the fact that Gratian also led invasions across the frontiers is now conveniently forgotten by those historians who have settled for the reconstructions and opinions of the past. Furthermore, this surface perception conceals several disturbing aspects of his rule. The first is his alienation of the Roman Senate. Although he remained strong enough to ignore the animosity of the Senate – especially during the 'sorcery' trials – the legacy that he left resulted in Gratian, who did not have his father's reputation, being forced to appease the Senate by dismissing his father's appointees. Although in many cases Gratian may have been dismissing men he thought to have been a residual liability from his father's rule, Valentinian's death can be seen as marking the change between a subservient Senate and a Senate willing and able to retake more and more of its ancient prerogatives, to the extent that by the time of Stilicho (395–408) their self-interest began to seriously affect the ability of the empire to defend itself.

Moreover, analysis of Valentinian's military campaigns suggests that at least one – the 'First' Alamannic War – was fought primarily with the purpose of gaining political prestige, whilst another – the war against Macrianus – was the result of Valentinian's mismanagement of political realities. Macrianus never posed a threat to the empire and his code of conduct ensured that his people remained steadfast in their support. Furthermore, Macrianus' loyalty to Rome after the end of the war demonstrates that the war itself was unnecessary and the result of mistaken assumptions. It would almost certainly have been better if Valentinian had never attempted to eliminate Macrianus from his elevated position amongst the Alamanni.

Finally, Valentinian's inability to perceive the deceptions which faced him at court ensured that the rebellion of Firmus became a major war when a thorough investigation into the affairs of North Africa would have ensured that Firmus remained loyal to the West.

As a consequence of these deliberations, it would appear that although Valentinian's reputation appears to be secure, it is based on insecure foundations. Valentinian was not quite the emperor portrayed in many modern sources.

Valens, on the other hand, is universally deplored as the epitome of a poor emperor. This is largely due to the circumstances surrounding two decisions. One was his 'decision' to fight at the Battle of Adrianople, where his actions are interpreted as being 'indecisive diplomatically and tactically'.⁶ These traits are echoed by another comment on his reign: 'Valens was utterly undistinguished ... and possessed no military ability: he betrayed his consciousness of inferiority by his nervous suspicion of plots and savage punishment of alleged traitors.'⁷ Neither of these opinions take into account that Valens was attempting to secure peace with the Goths when – against his orders – fighting between the two armies began spontaneously.

The second 'decision' was his 'persecution' of Orthodox, Nicene Christians. As shown previously, these 'persecutions' have been exaggerated by the ancient Nicene Christian sources. Although 'persecutions' did take place, they were not on the scale as depicted, nor were they of the violent and destructive nature inherent in the earlier persecutions of, for example, Galerius and Diocletian.

A close analysis of his reign shows that, contrary to superficial perceptions, Valens was 'a conscientious administrator, careful of the interests of the humble. Like his brother, he was an earnest Christian.'⁸ Furthermore, his tax policies were tolerant of the circumstances of others, especially when citizens were suffering from 'acts of God' such as the tsunami early in his reign.

Likewise, although his actions are often interpreted as a duplication of Valentinian's policies in the West, on closer examination it is possible that measures such as the building programme along the Danube were either instigated by Valens rather than Valentinian, or were at least autonomous measures coincidental to the policies adopted by his brother.

Conclusion

It is clear that Valentinian's reputation as the last great military emperor of the West has some foundation in reality, but is to a large part based upon exaggeration and propaganda. He was certainly the last Western emperor to project the image of strength and invincibility into '*barbaricum*', and he was the last Emperor who was neither dominated by his courtiers or whose death was the result of a rebellion.

Although in some respects open to question, in comparison to the rulers immediately before and after him Valentinian's reputation and status is secure.

Valens is another matter. His reputation is based upon the last events of his life, combined with a religious 'character assassination' initiated by the supporters of his successor Theodosius and mindlessly repeated down the centuries. It is clear that Valens had many faults, not least because his military reputation remains lower than that of his brother. However, close analysis has proved that his suppression of the Procopian Revolt coupled with his political outmanoeuvring of Shapur II and his ability to regain political dominance of Armenia and Iberia demonstrates that his poor reputation is to a large extent unjustified.

Although his indecision and lack of control resulted in the loss of the Battle of Adrianople, there is no reason to believe that he was outwitted by Fritigern. If anything, it may have been his lack of a strong personality that was the cause of the defeat: it is hard to believe that any sub-commanders under Valentinian or Theodosius would have contemplated beginning the battle before the order had been given.

Likewise, Valens' 'persecution' of Nicene Christians was a mistake and in hindsight was easily avoidable. Yet he could not have known that he would die in battle in 378 and that his successor in the East would be a devout Nicene general from the West. In this context, his 'mistake' is to some degree understandable, although still a mistake.

Unlike Valentinian, Valens deserves to be held in higher regard than is presently the case. Like many emperors, he erred, but despite this his reign needs to be reevaluated and his successes should be held up for all to see.

Appendix 1

There are many chronological problems with the account of the first phase of the Alamannic War as given by Ammianus in books 26 and 27. Ammianus dates the Alamannic invasion to on or shortly after 1 January and by implication to 365. This has led to difficulties for subsequent historians.

The main question relates to Ammianus' statement that the Alamanni invaded 'immediately after the first of January', as he does not clearly state which year this took place.² It is sometimes taken to be 365, since at this point the envoys who had failed to gain the traditional 'gifts' in 364 will have returned home empty handed and the enraged Alamanni are assumed to have immediately gathered prior to invasion on the first day of the following year.

This does indeed make some sense: it is possible that the indignant Alamanni will have determined to attack at the earliest possible opportunity. However, there are many problems with accepting this date. The first and major issue is the overall chronology this implies. First, the Alamanni defeat Charietto and Severianus in battle and subsequently attack the now-defenceless local areas.³ They then retreat with their booty. It is known that Dagalaifus attempted to attack the Alamanni, but he took too long, and by the time he set out in pursuit the Alamanni had left Roman territory. Dagalaifus did not have the emperor's permission to lead an expedition across the Rhine. He was recalled, apparently 'in order to receive the consular insignia with Gratian'.⁴ After Dagalaifus' recall Jovinus prepared a new campaign for when the Alamanni returned, after which he defeated them in three battles.

The main questions raised by this chronology revolve around the concept that this was all completed within a single year. For example, if the invasion was on or shortly after 1 January 365, as sometimes proposed, there remains the question of why it took such a long time for Valentinian to move the court nearer to the threatened area in order to take control of the situation.

Furthermore, according to this chronology the defeat of Charietto must have taken place in either January or February. Although Dagalaifus took a long time to respond to the attacks, there is the explicit statement in Ammianus that he was recalled to take part in the ceremony surrounding his assumption of the consulship, which took place in January of the following year. The assumption must be that either the messenger relaying the information concerning the defeat was extremely slow, or that it took eight or nine months for Valentinian to take action after the death of Charietto. This is clearly unacceptable.

As a final note, Dagalaifus was unable to attack the Alamanni 'under pretext that it was impossible for him to attack the barbarians while they were scattered over various places'.⁵ Although there is every chance that Dagalaifus did make such a claim, the idea that it is a 'pretext' is likely to be an assumption by Ammianus rather than a fact: it is extremely doubtful that Ammianus would have had access to an accurate description of the reasoning behind Dagalaifus' decision. Instead, Ammianus, a supporter of the Senate, is following his theme of portraying Valentinian in a poor light. Furthermore, if the Alamanni had dispersed, there would be little chance of Jovinus locating the three original bands that Ammianus claimed had invaded earlier.

Instead it is far more likely that at some point in summer or early autumn the Alamanni retreated with their booty, leaving Dagalaifus behind without permission to pursue across the Rhine. He then sent messengers to Valentinian stating that the enemy had dispersed and Valentinian accordingly issued a recall for Dagalaifus so that preparations could be made for the new year. The sending of these messengers alone would have taken at least two or three weeks, resulting in the chronology becoming even more compressed.

As a result of these deliberations, and based on the assumption that Dagalaifus was recalled prior to his consulship on 1 January 366, it is clear that Ammianus' description is flawed. The simplest and most logical conclusion is that Ammianus, stationed in the East, was informed that the Alamanni had attacked, and that they had attacked on 1 January. He has simply conflated two separate attacks, hence the confusion. A more accurate assumption is that there were two attacks, an early one composed of smaller bands of raiders intent on taking as much booty as possible before the return of the Western 'Field Army' that was still with Valentinian, and a second after the returning Alamanni had boasted of their victory and the ease of their raid. The first of these invaded Gaul at some point early in 365, destroying the small force led by Charietto and gathering large amounts of plunder from the areas left undefended by the defeat. Although sent to attack the Alamanni, Dagalaifus was only able to catch a few stragglers at the most before the enemy had returned home.

Shortly afterwards Dagalaifus was recalled and Jovinus, 'commander of the cavalry, was appointed to the task, and after being most thoroughly equipped and prepared' he waited for the next attack.⁶ Again, this will have taken a long time, so eliminating the idea that the Alamannic attacks all took place within a single year.

In this context, the second attack is the one described by Ammianus as taking place 'immediately after the first of January' and is taken as occurring in 366. Although this does contradict Ammianus, who specifically claims that Charietto faced the Alamanni who had invaded in January, it is easier to accept that Ammianus made a simple chronological error rather than attempting to force all of the events into a single year.⁷

The Battles of Jovinus

The main Alamannic invasions took place around 1 January, now established as in the year 366. Time needs to be allowed for news of the invasion to reach Jovinus and for Jovinus to collect his forces from their winter quarters and set out in pursuit. As Jovinus will not have known for certain that the Alamanni would invade, there are several reasons why it is unlikely that he will have already concentrated his forces into one position. One is the fact that the need to supply a large number of troops in one place in the middle of winter would have put a tremendous burden on the logistics system. Another is that, not knowing of the route an attack would take, he will have wanted to leave garrisons in local towns, especially those designated as supply depots for the upcoming campaign. Instead, as just noted, he will have kept his forces dispersed and arranged for specific towns on the most likely invasion routes to have gathered large stores of supplies in order to act as supply depots for his forces as they campaigned against the fast-moving Alamannic invaders.

As a result of these deliberations, it is likely that at the earliest Jovinus will have moved to face the Alamanni by mid February, and given the cautious nature of his movements it is likely that he faced the first Alamannic force in early-mid March.

The accurate dating of the second battle is impossible. Allowing time for Jovinus' army to recover from the first battle, regroup and find the second Alamannic force, the earliest date for the second battle would be the end of March. Ammianus, however, informs us that Jovinus was again 'advancing slowly when he heard from a trustworthy scouting party' that the second group of Alamanni was 'resting near the river'.⁸ Taking Jovinus' cautious advance into account, plus the possibility that along the way he was faced with numerous small bands of roving invaders, it is likely that the second battle was fought at some time in April.

The dating of the third battle is possible to estimate thanks to a comparison of Ammianus with the *Codex Theodosianus*. A comparison of the movements of Valentinian as outlined in the *Codex* with the report given by Ammianus of Jovinus appearing at court to report on his victories to Valentinian in person gives an approximate date for the third battle of mid-late June.⁹

Proposed Chronology

Mid-365 the gathering of the early harvest and completing of the spring planting, a large number of Alamanni, disgusted at the loss of their 'gifts' but heartened by the continued absence of the 'Field Army' from Gaul, launch a series of large raids against the Empire.

Summer 365, having gained the support of Severianus, the commander of the Divitenses and Tungricani, stationed at Cabillona (Châlon-sur-Saône), advances against the invaders. He is defeated in battle.

Winter/Autumn 365 news of the defeat and orders Dagalaifus with a detachment of the army to pursue and defeat the enemy.

October-November 365 Dagalaifus attempts to catch the Alamanni as they leave Roman territory with their booty: they would need to be home in October to plant their winter crops. He fails and reports his failure to Valentinian, who recalls him so that he can be present during the preparations and festivities surrounding Dagalaifus' nomination and acclamation as Consul.

After Christmas 366 their winter crops and gathering their forces, the Alamanni invade on three fronts.

Mid-February 366 In the face of the Alamannic attacks, Jovinus cautiously leads his troops in search of the enemy.

Early March 366 Jovinus locates the enemy and in a surprise attack defeat a large band of Alamanni at the 'Battle of Scarponna'.

April 366 cautiously advancing through Gaul, and possibly defeating smaller groups of raiding tribesmen en route, Jovinus wins a victory over a second band of Alamanni.

Mid-June-July 366 Jovinus defeats a third large band of Alamanni before returning to court to report his success.

Outline Chronology

284

Accession of Diocletian

363

26 July Death of Julian

27 July Accession of Jovian

363–364

Alamanni devastate Gaul and Raetia, Sarmatae and Quadi devastate Pannonia; Picts, Saxons and Scots attack Britain; Austoriani and other Moors attack 'Africa'; Goths plunder Thrace and Pannonia

364

17 February Death of Jovian

25 February Valentinian crowned emperor

1 March Valens appointed *Tribunus Stabuli* (Commander of the Imperial Stables)

28 May Valentinian proclaims Valens as co-emperor: acclaimed by army

Both emperors catch fever: recover and order unsuccessful investigation into possible sorcerous origin of illness

Shapur attempts to extend sphere of domination in East after death of Jovian

Valentinian and Valens move to Naissus and 'share the army'. From here Valentinian moves to Milan, Valens to Constantinople

364

Alaricus appoints Petronius as his co-regent in Gaul. Petronius quickly gains a reputation for greed and cruelty

365

1 January the two emperors enter their first joint consulship

WEST		EAST	
	Austoriani attack again in Africa		End of winter Shapur continues attempts to extend influence in East. Valens heads for Syria before crossing into Bithynia. Here he learns that the Goths are planning to invade Thrace, so sends reinforcements – including the Divitenses Iuniores and Tungricani Iuniores – from Bithynia with orders to wait for two days in Constantinople to recover from the march before going into Thrace to face the Goths
June (?)	Alamanni launch raids into Gaul. Charisio and Severianus defeated	21 July	Major earthquake in Crete. Massive tsunami devastates areas of Mediterranean
June–July	Valentinian travels to Gaul and learns of defeat of Charisio and Severianus. Sends Dagalaifus with army to repel attacks. Netherius sent to Africa	28 September	Procopius hailed emperor in Constantinople by Divitenses Iuniores and Tungricani Iuniores
	Dagalaifus fails to attack Alamanni. He is recalled and Jovinus appointed in his place	October	Valens receives news of Procopius' revolt. Sends flovi and Victores to face Procopius, but they join revolt
		Autumn	Troops in Thrace join revolt. Procopius sends messengers to Goths, claiming to be successor to Constantine I and asking for aid. Rebellion spreads
Winter	News arrives in the West of Procopius' revolt. Equitius promoted to <i>comes et magister militum per Rhodanum</i> with instructions to defend the diocese		Valens lays siege to Nicæa, but it is broken. City of Cyzicus taken by Procopius. End of year reinforcements arrive for Valens from East before troops go into winter quarters. Over winter Procopius alienates Arbizio

366

WEST		EAST	
After 1 January	After sowing their winter crops and gathering their forces, the Alamanni invade on three fronts	18 January	Birth of Valentinian, son of Valens (later called 'Galates')
Mid-late February	Receiving reports of the Alamannic attacks, Jovinus	Throughout	Shapur continues to exert political pressure on Roman allies in the east.
February	cautiously leads his troops in search of the enemy.		
Early March	Jovinus' scouts locate the enemy and in a surprise attack defeat a large band of Alamanni at the 'Battle of Scarponna'	Spring	New campaign against Procopius. Arbizio joins Valens.
April	After cautiously advancing through Gaul, and possibly defeating smaller groups of raiding tribesmen en route, Jovinus wins a victory over a second band of Alamanni	26 May	Battle of Naclia: Valens victorious
Mid-late June	Jovinus defeats a third large band of Alamanni at the Battle of Chalons before returning to court to report his success	27 May	Execution of Procopius
Unknown	Equitius lays siege to Philippopolis. Later executes Marcellinus, relative of Procopius		
Late September/ October	Episcopal riots in Rome		

367

WEST		EAST	
Spring	Valentinian begins year in Trier preparing for war with Alamanni. Alamanni peace overtures are rebuffed, except those sent by Macrianus. Religious unrest breaks out again in Rome.	Winter Post 30 May	Valens prepares for war against the Tervingi. Valens crosses Danube and invades 'Tervingia'. Tervingi take refuge in the mountains.
June	Valentinian receives news of 'Barbarian Conspiracy'. Sends Severus to report and if possible correct situation.		
Late June/July	Valentinian moves to Amiens. Severinus reports the situation on the coast is out of control. Jovinus sent with a large force. He begins driving the invaders out of Gaul. In the meantime, Valentinian is ill, but slowly recovers.	Summer?	Many Armenian nobles, including the 'Lord of Sophene', finally join Shapur. Shapur invades Armenia and sacks the tombs of the Armenian kings. Arshak II advances and Shapur retreats from Armenia.
24 August	Gratian is acclaimed Augustus in Amiens. The court is ordered to return to Trier. En route Valentinian receives messengers from Jovinus informing of the major assault on Britain and asking for reinforcements. Valentinian orders <i>comes</i> Theodosius to prepare to cross to Britain with an army in the new year. Jovinus continues the campaign to evict the Saxons and Franks from Gaul before returning to court.	Late September Late 367	Having achieved little, Valens withdraws and arrives back in Durostorum. Arshak surrenders to Shapur and is deposed. Arshak's son Pap takes refuge in the fortress of Artagerassa and is besieged. Shapur invades Iberia. The pro-Roman Iberian King Saurimaces is deposed and his pro-Sasanid cousin Aspacurus is placed on the throne.

368

WEST		EAST	
Winter	Theodosius lands in Britain.	Winter	News arrives of Isaurian 'revolt'. Pap escapes from Artagerassa and arrives at Valens' court.
Spring	Roman troops arrive in Britain. Theodosius retakes London. Rando attacks Maiaz as Valentinian prepares to attack 'southern' Alamanni.	Spring	News arrives of Shapur's removal of Saurimaces and imposition of Aspacurus as King of Iberia. News also arrives of Maratocrupeni reverting to banditry.
Summer	Theodosius sends troops out from London to attack the invaders. Valentinian attacks Alamanni. Battle of Solicinium. Valentinian returns to Empire.	Summer	Flooded Danube halts campaign against Tervingi. Beginning of Valens' fort-building programme.

369

WEST		EAST	
		1 January	1st Consulship Valentinian Galates
Summer	Valentinian launches 'Alta Ripa' campaign. Valentinian begins fort building programme. Valentinian orders building of Zähringer Bargberg for new Alamanni 'King'	Summer	Valens orders Terentius and Addens to accompany Pap back to Armenia
Late Summer/ Autumn	Valentinian orders building of fort at 'Mons Piri'. Revolt of Alamanni in north. Outbreak of Alamanni War with Macrianus	July	Valens crosses Danube and defeats Tervingi at unnamed battle
		Autumn	Learning of Pap's return, Shapur launches invasion of Armenia
Autumn/Winter	Possible date for Valentinian divorcing Severa and marriage of Justina. Valentinian sends envoys to Burgundians and agrees a joint campaign against Macrianus. 'Brigandage' flares up in Gaul. Beginning of 'Sorcery' trials in Rome	Winter	Negotiations begin between Valens and Athanaric. Valens orders preparations for transfer of army to the east. Eintrigius begins work on 'Breviaria'

370

WEST		EAST	
Winter	The trials continue	Winter	Death of Valentinian Galates. Shapur convinces Pap to change allegiance
Spring	Valentinian sends troops to quell the disturbances in Gaul	February/March	'Treaty of Noviodunum': peace with Tervingi. Ariantheus immediately sent East to face Shapur
		April	Persian envoys arrive at Valens' court
Spring/Summer	Burgundians attack Alamanni. Romans unable to complete dual attack. Furious, Burgundians retire home.	May/June	Valens sends Terentius and '12 legions' to restore Sauronaces in Iberia. Partitioning of Iberia. Troops sent to defeat Marasroterpeni
Summer/Autumn	Valentinian leads army to find source of Danube	Summer	Ariantheus begins persecution of Christians. Outbreak of Tervingian civil war
		Autumn	Famine in Phrygia
		Winter	Shapur declares Treaty of 363 void and prepares for war

371

WEST		EAST	
Spring	Trials continue in Rome. Attempt to capture Macrianus fails: Macrianus flees and is replaced by Eutrochius Theodosius invades <i>Alamanorum</i> from Raetia	Spring	Battle of Thapsus
		Spring/Summer	Battle of Bagawan Kushans invade eastern Persia
		Summer	Battle of Ganzak Shapur learns of Kushan invasion: ceasefire with Rome: peace treaty to last for seven years

372

			Armenian princes who had defected to Shapur return their allegiance to King Pap
			King Pap kills Nerses, Armenian Patriarch
Summer/Autumn	Phaonarius expelled from <i>Albania</i> Theodosius campaigns against the Sarmatians		Valens helps Prigern to defeat Arathous and achieve a stalemate in the Tervingian civil war; out of thanks, Prigern and his followers convert to Arianism
Autumn/Winter	Maximian returns to <i>Albania</i> Theodosius possibly fights a campaign against the Quadi	Summer?	Pap claims ten Roman cities belong to Armenia Famine in Syrian Edeess

373

WEST		EAST	
Winter	Theodosius <i>comes</i> ordered to prepare for African campaign; his son Theodosius replaces him in Illyricum	January	Valens legislates that Christian (Nicene) monks are to serve in the army
Spring	Theodosius begins African campaign against Firmus Valens sends troops from the East to garrison Illyricum Tensions mount with Quadi as building work on forts across the frontier resume	3 May	Death of Athanasius of Alexandria; beginning of Valens' persecution of Nicenes (Catholics) Attempt to 'arrest' Pap of Armenia fails; Terentius replaced by Traianus in attempt to regain Pap's trust

374

WEST		EAST	
	Theodosius continues campaign against Firmus in Africa		Traianus attempts to regain the trust of King Pap of Armenia
Spring	Valentinian invades <i>Albania</i> in attempt to defeat Maximian		
Autumn	Quadi invade Pannonia, before joining with Sarmatians in a second attack. Theodosius the Younger leads a 'guerrilla' campaign which defeats invaders and forces them out of Roman territory Valentinian learns of joint attack on Pannonia		
Autumn/Winter	Valentinian and Maximian sign peace treaty. End of Alamanic War Theodosius defeats Firmus' allies; Firmus commits suicide; end of African revolt		Losing patience with Pap, Valens orders Traianus to assassinate the Armenian king

WEST		EAST	
Spring	Valentinian leaves Trier and moves to Carnuntum. En route met by Sarmatian delegation asking for peace	Winter/Spring	Isaurians 'revolt' again: troops sent and revolt quickly quashed
		(unknown)	On Valens' orders, Traianus executes King Pap of Armenia. Vazandad acclaimed as King
Early Autumn	Valentinian launches attack on Quadi. Valentinian returns to Aquincum. Troops sent to winter quarters at Savaria. Valentinian moves to Brigetio	Summer/Autumn	End of Persio-Kushan War. Shapur returns west to Roman frontier and demands that Rome evacuate either Armenia or Iberia. Valens refuses
17 November	Valentinian receives Quadic delegation: dies after apoplectic fit		
22 November	Valentinian II acclaimed emperor at Brigetio	Winter	Shapur sends further delegation seeking favourable terms with Valens

WEST		EAST	
Winter/Spring	Execution of <i>lower</i> Theodosius in Africa. Theodosius the Younger retires to his estates	Spring	Valens sends envoys to Shapur demanding that the Sassanids evacuate Iberia or face war. Both Sassanids and Rome begin preparations for war
		Late Summer/ Early Autumn	Tervingi and Greuthungi arrive on Danube seeking sanctuary
	Gratian and Valentinian II divide control of the West	Autumn/Early winter	Tervingi allowed to enter empire, Greuthungi refused permission Roman troops withdrawn from frontier to supervise movement of Tervingi: Greuthungi cross undefended Danube Badly treated, the Tervingi revolt: Battle of Marcianople, Tervingi victorious Tervingi ally with Greuthungi, formation of 'Goths' Siege of Adrianople. Frigern declares himself 'at peace with walls'

WEST		EAST	
Spring/Early Summer	Gratian receives request from Valens for help: orders troops to Thrace to help against Goths	Winter/Spring	Valens receives news of Gothic rebellion. Sends troops to Balkans
		Spring	Rebellion of Maxia. Attacks along eastern frontier of Palestine and Phoenicia to Egyptian borders
		Spring	Valens sends messengers to Gratian asking for help
		Summer	Maxia defeats Roman army commanded by Julius, <i>magister equitum et peditum per Orientem</i> With war threatening to erupt on three fronts Valens sends embassies to Shapur and Maxia requesting peace Arrival of reinforcements from east under Proflumarus and Trianus in Balkans. Goths pinned back into mountains
Autumn	Frigeridus retreats from Frigirern's advance and defeats Farnulus in battle before blockading mountain passes to West		Arrival of Western reinforcements in Balkans. Battle of Ad Salices. Romans revert to strategy of blockade Goths secure alliance of some Huns and Alans. Blockade broken. Goths run at will over Balkans. Battle of Dabatum Under increasing pressure, Valens halts 'persecutions'

378

WEST		EAST	
Winter	Realising the severity of the situation in Thrace, Gratian orders his troops to prepare to move East	Winter	Negotiations continue with Shapur and Maxia. Agreement reached with Shapur, Treaty concluded with Maxia
February	A tribesman on leave from the Roman army informs the Lentienses of Gratian's decision. The Lentienses organize a series of fast raids Learning of the attacks, Gratian recalls troops from Pannonia and orders Nannienus to attack the invaders		
April/May	Gratian begins the march to the East	Spring	Troops recalled from Armenia
May	Nannienus oversees Roman victory at Battle of Argentaria. Gratian changes course of march and attacks the Lentienses' homeland	April	Valens leaves Antioch and heads towards Constantinople
		30 May	Valens reaches Constantinople
Summer	Gratian resumes march east. Reaches <i>Magna Castra</i> , where attacked by fever before being attacked by Alans	Summer	Varazdat agrees and executes Mushel. Armenian 'civil war'. Varazdat seeks refuge with Valens. Manuel, relative of Mushel, victorious but forced to turn to Shapur for aid against expected Roman intervention. Shapur appoints Arsaces and Valasaces, Pap's sons, as joint kings. Many Armenian nobles oppose arrangement and Shapur forced to concentrate on keeping control of Armenia Sebastianus appointed <i>magister militum</i> and in a series of 'guerrilla' raids forces Goths back into mountains

The Adrianople Campaign and After

Valens sets out for Adrianople.

En route, Valens informed of Gothic presence to north. Adopts defensive stance and slowly continues march.

Scouts inform Valens Goths only 10,000 strong.

Arrival of Richomer with news that Gratian finally marching towards Thrace.

8 August ~~Valens~~ Gratian convenes council: decision taken to advance towards Goths.

Gothic embassy arrives requesting peace talks but is turned away.

9 August ~~Valens~~ Gratian leads army towards Gothic encampment. Peace talks begin.

Roman troops attack Goths and Battle of Adrianople begins. Roman army defeated. Death of Valens.

Gratian recalls Theodosius the Younger from his estates and places him in charge of the campaign against the Goths.

Theodosius wins battle against Sarmatians.

379

19 January ~~Gratian~~ Gratian elevates Theodosius to position of co-emperor. Gratian also allocates Illyricum to be under Theodosius' control.

381

Athanasius finally seeks refuge in Empire. Accepted by Theodosius, he dies 21 January 381. The funeral ceremony is intended to improve relations with the invading Goths.

382

Peace Treaty with Goths. End of Gothic War.

383

Revolt of Magnus Maximus. Death of Gratian.

386/7

Maximus invades Italy.

388

Theodosius invades West. Battle of Save, Maximus defeated. Battles of Siscia and Poetovio. Capture and execution of Maximus. Valentinian II restored, now in sole rule of West.

392

15 May ~~Valentinian II~~ Valentinian II found dead. Arbogast promotes Eugenius to Western Emperor.

394

Theodosius leads eastern army to victory over West at Battle of the Frigidus. Honorius presented as Western Emperor.

395

17 January ~~Death~~ of Theodosius I.

Select Personalities

Alatheus

The co-regent along with Saphrax for Vithericus after the death of King Vithimer in war against the Huns. Led the Huns across the Danube and fought alongside the Tervingi under Fritigern at the Battle of Adrianople.

Arbitio

A Roman general who served under Constantine I (the Great) and Constantius II. He retired but during the usurpation of Procopius he was put under pressure to join the rebellion. When he refused his properties were confiscated and shortly after he openly supported Valens. With his support the rebellion was crushed.

Arshak II

The King of Armenia, he found himself isolated from the Roman alliance by the Treaty of 363. Tricked into accepting an invitation from Shapur II, he was allegedly blinded and killed. Succeeded by his son, Pap.

Athanaric

The leader of the Tervingi in 369, he was attacked by Valens for his attempts to support the rebellion of Procopius. After fighting Valens to a standstill, he signed a treaty with Valens before starting a civil war, the opposition being led by Fritigern. Supported by Valens, Fritigern won a victory but the internal conflict was halted on the approach of the Huns. Athanaric led his people against the Huns but was defeated and was tempted to ask Valens for sanctuary. Decided against this and retreated to safety in the mountains of 'Caucaland' after defeating the Sarmatian inhabitants. In 381 he was accepted as a refugee by the new Emperor Theodosius I and shortly after died and was buried in Constantinople.

Dagalaifus

Roman *magister equitum*, took part in the decision to elect Valentinian I as emperor. In 365 he led a campaign to repel the Alamannic invasion but was withdrawn to celebrate his consulship in 366. His fate is unknown.

Equitius

The *magister militum per Illyricum*, he defended Illyricum during the revolt of

Procopius and later fought against the Sarmatians. He advised that the envoys of the Quadi be granted an audience with Valentinian I, during which the emperor died. He then took part in the decision to elevate Valentinian II as co-emperor with Valens and Gratian.

Equitius

A Tribune, Equitius may have been captured by the Tervingi at the Battle of Dibaltum, after which he escaped. At the Battle of Adrianople he refused to act as a hostage in the negotiations. He was killed during the battle.

Eudoxius

Bishop of Constantinople. An Arian, he was one of Valens' main advisors.

Euzebius

Bishop of Antioch. An Arian, he was one of Valens' main advisors.

Fraomarius

Following Macrianus' escape, Fraomarius was chosen by Valentinian I to replace the Alamannic 'King' against the wishes of the Alamanni. He was quickly forced to flee to the Empire for safety.

Firmus

Son of Nubel, a 'Moorish King', Firmus killed his half-brother Sammac, a friend of Romanus, the *comes Africae*. Afraid for his safety, Firmus revolted against Rome. Firmus was defeated after a protracted war by the *comes* Theodosius and committed suicide rather than allow himself to be caught.

Fritigern

A Christian Visigothic leader, Fritigern headed the anti-Athanasian forces in the Gothic civil war with the support of Valens. When the Huns destroyed the Tervingian polity, Fritigern and Alavivus were allowed to enter Roman territory. Badly treated, the Tervingi rebelled and were joined by the Greuthungi under Alatheus and Saphrax. The coalition went on to win the Battle of Adrianople.

Gildo

Brother of Firmus, he stayed loyal to Rome during Firmus' rebellion.

Gratian

Made Emperor by his father Valentinian I in 367, aged 8. He dominated the West after Valentinian's death in 375 until the usurpation of Magnus Maximus in 383, when he was killed. His 'slow reaction' to the Gothic War is assumed by some to be a major factor in Valens' defeat at Adrianople.

Jovian

Made Emperor in 363 after the death of Julian in Persia, Jovian had little

choice but to sign the treaty of 363, which gave large territories in the East to Persia. He died less than a year after assuming the purple.

Jovinus

One of Valentinian's most able generals, he served under both Julian and Jovian before entering service under Valentinian I. Destroyed Alamannic invaders in 366/367 before clearing Gaul of Frankish and Saxon raiders. He then played a major part in the Alamannic War of 367–369.

Julian

Commonly called 'The Apostate', Julian was the short-lived emperor who attempted to restore paganism as the dominant religion of the Empire. He was killed during the ill-fated invasion of Persia in 363.

Lupicinus

The *comes rei militaris* in Thrace in 376–377, Lupicinus' greed overcame his good sense and his attempts to enrich himself at the expense of the Tervingi was one of the major causes of the Gothic War.

Macrianus

The pre-eminent Alamannic leader from the 350s onwards, Macrianus was forced to fight a major war against Valentinian I. With overwhelming support from his countrymen Macrianus finally forced Valentinian to agree peace terms, after which he remained a loyal ally to Rome.

Mavia

'Queen' of the Tanûkhids, after the death of her husband she led a major revolt against Roman rule. After she defeated a Roman army in battle Valens was forced by the Gothic War to sign a peace treaty favourable to Mavia.

Maximinus

A Pannonian who was *Praefectus annonae* (Prefect of Supplies), he took charge of the investigation into claims of sorcerous practices amongst the Senate either late in 369 or early in 370. His actions are derided by Ammianus, a friend of the Senate.

Mushegh

See Mushel Mamikonean.

Mushel Mamikonean

An Armenian military commander of great skill, Mushel served both Arshak II and his son Pap. He was executed on the orders of the new king, Varazdat.

Petronius

The father-in-law of Valens, he quickly gained a reputation for greed after he was appointed *Patricius* and ordered to gather taxes for the new emperor.

Pap

Armenian king, succeeded his father Arshak II. When the Sasanids invaded Armenia Pap was eventually forced to flee to Valens for sanctuary. Ultimately restored to the kingship following Roman intervention, Pap alienated his own people by the execution of the Christian patriarch Narses, and his political machinations with Valens and Shapur II led to his assassination on the orders of Valens.

Procopius

A relative of Julian by marriage, Procopius' life was threatened with the emergence of Valentinian and Valens. Aware of growing resentment towards Valens, Procopius declared himself emperor. At first successful, his revolt failed largely due to his failure to win the support of the military hierarchy away from Valens. His treatment of the old general Arbitio did not help his cause.

Richomeres

The *comes domesticorum* of Gratian, he attempted to convince Valens to await Gratian's arrival before the Battle of Adrianople. He survived the battle and went on to serve Theodosius I in the East.

Romanus

The *comes Africae* under Valentinian I, he alienated many of the peoples of Africa with his behaviour. His actions helped to foment the revolt of Firmus. He was arrested by the *comes* Theodosius but his trial only took place after the death of Valentinian. He was acquitted.

Saphrax

A co-regent along with Alatheus for Vithericus after the death of King Vithimer in war against the Huns. Led the Huns across the Danube and fought alongside the Tervingi under Fritigern at the Battle of Adrianople.

Saturninus

A Roman general, he was appointed *magister equitum* by Valens after the inconclusive Battle of Ad Salices and sent to restore the situation in the Balkans. Pinning the Goths in the mountains, Saturninus' strategy was to force them into submission by starvation. The arrival of Hunnic and Alan reinforcements for the Goths resulted in Saturninus recalling his troops and the blockade was broken. Surviving the Battle of Adrianople, Saturninus was to serve Theodosius I in the East.

Sebastianus

A *comes rei militaris* under Valentinian I, Sebastianus served during Valentinian's Alamannic campaigns, but upon Valentinian's death Sebastianus was sent to an obscure posting by Merobaudes out of fear that the

troops would acclaim Sebastianus as emperor. In 378 he served under Valens in the East as *magister peditum*, driving the Goths back into the mountains. He was killed at the Battle of Adrianople.

Shapur II

The Sasanid Shah facing Valens, he concluded the ‘shameful’ Treaty of 363 with Jovian, securing much of the east for Persia. Tensions between Shapur and Valens were to remain high, with war threatening to erupt at any point, except for the period 372–375/6, when Shapur was fighting the Kushans in the east.

Symmachus

An outstanding orator and politician, he acted as an emissary between Valentinian I and the Senate. He rose to greater heights of power and prestige under Valentinian’s successors.

Terentius

A Roman general, he served Valens in Armenia, escorting Pap (q.v.) back to his kingdom. In 373/374 he urged Valens to remove Pap from the Armenian throne, and subsequently lost Pap’s trust and was recalled to court.

Themistius

Teacher and philosopher, he delivered several *orationes* to Valens during the latter’s reign. Used by Valens as an intermediary between the East and the court of Gratian after Valentinian I’s death in 375. He later served under Valens’ successor, Theodosius I.

Theodosius comes

Father of Emperor Theodosius I, Theodosius *comes* had an illustrious career under Valentinian I in the West, leading campaigns in Britain, against the Alamanni, and in Africa. He was executed shortly after the death of Valentinian I, presumably as he was seen as a threat to Gratian.

Theodosius (I)

Son of Theodosius *comes*, Theodosius led a successful campaign in the West against barbarian invaders. Upon the execution of his father he retired to his estates, but was called to serve in the East by Gratian after the death of Valens at the Battle of Adrianople. He was shortly afterwards elevated to emperor by Gratian.

Traianus

A Roman general, he was sent to replace Terentius in Armenia, before being ordered to assassinate Pap. Sent to face the Goths during the Gothic revolt, he was later accused of cowardice by Valens and dismissed before shortly afterwards being reinstated. He was killed at Adrianople.

Ulfila

Worked as a Christian missionary amongst the Goths before being expelled during the civil war between Athanaric and Fritigern. He later devised the 'Gothic' alphabet and translated the Bible into 'Gothic'.

Urnayr

The (Christian) King of Albania, despite their religious differences he remained a loyal ally to Shapur II. He served alongside Shapur in several invasions of Armenia.

Valens

Eastern Roman Emperor (364–378), brother of Valentinian I.

Valentinian I

Western Roman Emperor (364–375), brother of Valens.

Valentinian II

Western Roman Emperor (375–392), son of Valentinian I, half-brother of Gratian. On the death of his father Valentinian II was elevated to the throne by Valentinian I's generals, aged just 4. He was subordinate to Gratian until the latter's death in 383, after which there was an uneasy truce between Valentinian and the usurper Magnus Maximus until the latter invaded Italy in 386/387. Reinstated by Theodosius I after a military campaign, he was later found hanged, though whether this was a suicide or an assassination on the order of the *magister militum* Arbogast is unknown.

Varazdat

King of Armenia (374–378), he ordered the assassination of Mushel Mamikonean. Mushel's successor forced Varazdat to seek sanctuary with Theodosius I.

Victor

A Sarmatian, he served under Constantius II, Julian and Jovian before continuing under Valens. He served in the Gothic War and in 377 was sent to Persia to negotiate a treaty with Shapur II following the outbreak of Gothic revolt. He managed to survive the Battle of Adrianople after attempting to rescue Valens, but his later career is little known.

Vitheric

Son and successor of Vithimer, King of the Greuthungi, upon his father's death he was a minor and Alatheus and Saphrax were appointed as his guardians. Assumed to have accompanied his people into the territory of the Roman Empire, his fate is unknown.

Notes

Introduction

1. e.g. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 33.
2. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, pp. 139–54.
3. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*.
4. Valentinian, e.g. Alföldi, A, *A Conflict of Ideas in the Late Roman Empire: The Clash Between the Senate and Valentinian I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952); Valens, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*.
5. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 49; Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 73; cf. AM 26.4.3.
6. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, pp. 280–281.
7. Although some historians have claimed that Eutropius – and later Festus – were responsible for ‘dictating’ policy to Valens, recent work by Lenski has demonstrated that this is unlikely to have been the case: *Failure of Empire*, p. 186f.
8. Kulikowski, *Rome’s Gothic Wars*, p. 69, n. 2.
9. Collins, *Visigothic Spain*, p. 19.

Chapter 1

1. There are two versions of the ‘vision’: Lactantius (*De Mortibus Persecutorum* 44.4–6) claims that Constantine was visited in a dream on the night before the battle; Eusebius (*Vita Constantini* 1.28) claims that prior to the war in the middle of the day Constantine saw a huge cross in the sky and was later visited by Christ in a dream.
2. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 73.
3. *Ibid.*, 394.
4. Eusebius, *De Vita Imperatoris Constantini*, 1.13–18.
5. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*.
6. Readers should note that this is a simplified view of the debate concerning *homooúsios*, *anomoios* and the nature of Christ. For further analysis, see CAH, p. 32f. and associated bibliography.
7. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 4.
8. It should be noted that this is a very simplified version of the complex events that unfolded upon the death of Constantine I.
9. Pro-Arian, Jones, *The Decline of the Ancient World*, p. 328; semi-Arianism, Jones, *The Decline of the Ancient World*, p. 134, although it should be noted that Constantius’ motives are open to debate.
10. Zon. 13.6.33.
11. AM 30.7.3; cf. Symm. *Or.* 1.1.
12. AM 30.7.3. On Constans’ campaign, AM 20.1.1, and associated n. 1. See also PLRE I, *Gratianus* 2, p. 401.
13. See below.
14. It should be noted that the family ties of the Constantinian dynasty are complex, so whenever possible the simplest terms will be used to describe familial relationships.
15. AM 30.7.3.

Chapter 2

1. The strengths accorded to the different army units is based largely upon Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire* and Coello, *Unit Sizes in the Late Roman Army*. Although the numbers presented are open to doubt, especially when regional variations have been taken into consideration, they are here given as a rough guide to the average size of units.
2. This is a simplified description of the nature of the Roman army in the fifth century. For further details, see Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*, and Coello, *Unit Sizes in the Late Roman Army*, plus bibliographies.
3. Conversation with Adrian Goldsworthy.
4. Phil. 7.7; AM 16.11.9; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 49. On the *Equites Cornuti*, see below.
5. AM 16.11.4–7.
6. AM 16.11.6–7.
7. AM 16.11.7.
8. There are several versions of events at this time. Rufinus (11.2), Sozomen (6.6), Theoderet (3.12.1–3), Zonaras (13.15.4), Theophanes (79B) and the *Chronicon Paschale* (s.a. 363) all claim that his dismissal was due to his Christian piety. The version told by Ammianus has been used, as he was closer to events and not writing to promote Christianity.
9. Aur. Vict. 47; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 359; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 359; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 359.
10. The suggestion by Lenski that Valentinian used his time to ‘court’ other nobles is misleading. Valentinian simply followed in the traditions of his class by making and maintaining political and military connections throughout the diocese: to do otherwise would have resulted in censure and alienation from his peers.
11. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 82.
12. AM 18.3.1–4.
13. This is in direct contrast to the claim by Sozomen that ‘as soon as Jovian succeeded to the throne, Valentinian was recalled from banishment’: Soz. 6.6.
14. Phil. 7.7.
15. AM 21.13.6.
16. AM 21.15.2–3.
17. Conversation with Adrian Goldsworthy.
18. Cornuti, *Not Dig. Oc.* 5.24.
19. *Equites Cornuti*, ‘seniors’, *Not. Dig. Oc.* VI 48: ‘*iuniores*’ *Oc.* VI 49 (both = *Not. Dig.* VI 193?).
20. It should be noted that although in the *Notitia* the *Equites Cornuti* is listed under the *Magister Equitum*, the *Notitia* is a later document and at this earlier date it would appear sensible to accept that the cavalry unit was still serving under the ‘Commander of the Cavalry’.
21. Ioviani/Ioviniani, Soz. 6.6; *Not. Dig. Occ.* 5.2 and 145; Herculiani, *Not. Dig.* 5.3 and 146.
22. AM 12.4.1–5.
23. Joh. Ant. fr.179.
24. Conversation with Perry Gray.
25. Egyptian Thebes, Phil. 7.7, 8.5; Theod. 3.16; Oros. 7.32.2; Melitine, Soz. 6.6.
26. Year, *Cons. Const.* s.a. 363 etc.; month, *Chron. Edes.* s.a. 674.
27. *Cons. Const.* S.A. 363; AM 25.5.1; Joh. Mal. 13.23; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 363.
28. AM 25.5.3.
29. AM 25.5; Zos. 3.30.1.
30. AM 25.5.
31. As had, for example, Diocletian (284–305), Maximin Daia (308–313) and Constantius I (293–306).
32. Several earlier emperors, including Aurelian (270–275), Diocletian and the founders of the Constantinian dynasty, had come from Illyria.

33. AM 26.6.1.
34. AM 23.3.2; 26.6. 2–3; Zos. 4.4.2; see also PLRE, Procopius 4, 742–743.
35. Zos. 4.4.3.
36. AM 25.7.9–14.
37. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 18; *Suid.* I.401; Ø 64; and Joh. Ant. fr. 181.
38. AM 25.8.7–10.
39. AM 25.10.6–7.
40. AM 25.8.11; 25.10.6.
41. AM 25.10.6–7; cf. Symm. *Or.* 1.6.
42. *Hist. Aceph.* 12. This may have only applied to the East in the first instance.
43. AM 25.9.12.
44. cf. *Hist. Aceph.* 13.
45. AM 25.10.9.
46. Soz. 6.6; AM 26.1.5.
47. AM 26.1.5.
48. Eut. 10.18; AM 26.1.5; Soc. 3.26.5.
49. Based on Eut. 10.18. John of Antioch claims that it was ‘poisoned’ rather than ‘poisonous’ mushrooms (fr. 181).
50. AM 26.1.4.
51. AM 26.1.4–5.
52. Zos. 3.36.1–2.
53. AM 26.1.5.
54. Support, Phil. 8.8; recommended by Sallustius, Phil. 8.8; *Suid.* ?64.
55. *CIL* 6.1729 = *ILS* 1254. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 21.
56. Some historians place the crowning of Valentinian on 26 February. But this seems to be an error, counting the bisextile day as 25 February rather than a second 24 February.
57. AM 26.2.6–10; Phil. 8.8; Soz. 6.6.8 etc.
58. AM 26.2.3.
59. AM 26.2.8–11.
60. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 23–24.
61. AM 26.4.1.
62. Phil. 8.14; Jord. *Rom.* 307; Lib. *Or.* 20.25.
63. AM 31.14.1; died at age of almost 50. cf. Aur. Vict. 46; Soc. 4.38.11; Soz. 6.40.5.
64. AM 31.14.7.
65. AM 31.14.5; Zos. 4.4.1.
66. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 53.
67. See the analysis below.
68. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 52–53; Soc. 3.13.3–4, 4.1–8; Joh. Ant. fr. 179.
69. Dagalaifus was not convinced of Valens’ suitability for the throne: see above.
70. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 52 notes that there was not enough time between Valentinian’s coronation and the meeting of the brothers five days later for Valens to have travelled all the way from Pannonia. Therefore, it would appear that Valens was retained in an unknown military capacity.
71. AM 26.4.2. See also Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 23.
72. AM 26.4.3. For different dates, *Cons. Const.* s.a. 364; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 364.
73. AM 26.4.3; Them. *Or.* 6.82.

Chapter 3

1. Name, Zos. 13.14; mentioned by Joh. Ant. fr. 181, dated to 363.
2. Zon. 13.14.
3. Joh. Chrys. *ad vid.iun.* 4 (*Tractatus ad viduam iuniorum*: ‘Letter to a Young Widow’).
4. *CTh.* 1.28.2.
5. For example, *CTh.* 11.1.8, which although attributed to Valentinian and Valens is shown

- by the date to have been one of Jovian's edicts.
6. AM 264.4; *quaestor sacri palatii*, 27.3.11.
7. Zos. 13.14.15f.; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 25.
8. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 35.
9. *CTh.* 13.3.6 (11 January 364). On the date, see Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 293, and n. 10.
10. *CTh.* 9.16.9 (29 May 371).
11. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 171.
12. See Chapter 1.
13. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, pp. 125–126; see also Chapter 1.
14. See also Chapter 2.
15. For a more detailed analysis of the debate, see e.g. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 177f. and Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, ch. 5, esp. p. 234ff.
16. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 175: during the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, no general laws and only a few laws of 'local application' would be recorded in the *Codex Theodosianus*.
17. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 40.
18. For a full discussion, see Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p.93f.
19. Troops, *CTh.* 7.4.10; 11.14.1; 13.1.5; taxes, 11.20.2: all dated to April 364.
20. *CTh.* 7.1.5; 8.5.18 (both 13 May 364).
21. *CTh.* 15.1.11 (25 May 364), but cf. *CTh.* 8.5.19.
22. Bona Mansio, *CTh.* 14.2.1 (1 June 364); Naissus itself, *CTh.* 14.3.3.
23. For this information and the following division, AM 26.5.1–3.
24. Jovinus, PLRE I, *Flavius Jovinus* 6 (462–463); Dagalaifus, PLRE I, *Dagalaifus* (239).
25. Lupicinus, PLRE I, *Flavius Lupicinus* 6 (520–522); Equitius, PLRE I, *Flavius Equitius* 2 (282).
26. Serenianus, PLRE I, *Serenianus* 2 (825).
27. *CTh.* 14.5.1 (10 July, Naissus); 10.7.2 (23 July, Sirmium).
28. Tomlin, 'Ammianus Marcellinus 26.4.5–6', p. 471f.
29. On the reasons for Valentinian's choice of the West, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 270f., plus bibliography.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
31. Zos. 4.3.1; Them. Or. 6.74b, 82a–b, 7.92a; Symm. Or. 1.14, 3.11; Phil. 8.8; Soz. 6.6; Ruf. 11.2; Theod. 4.6.3, 5.1.2; Zon. 13.15; Theoph. a.m. 5856; Jord. *Rom.* 307; Festus §13; Greg. Nys. *Eun.* 1.143; Syn. *Ep.* 66.
32. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 1.
33. Hughes, *Stilicho*, pp. 76f., 168f.
34. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 3.
35. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 57.
36. For an analysis of the appointments made by Valentinian and Valens, see Matthews, 1998, p. 32ff; Lenski, 2002, 57ff.
37. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 47.
38. AM 22.12.7
39. On the extensive measures Julian used to avert the grain crisis, Jul. Mis. 369a–b.
40. AM 30.8.8.
41. On the financial status of the empire and the estimated costs of pacifying the army, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 290.
42. AM 26.8.6–7.
43. AM 26.5.4.
44. As evidenced by a number of laws passed in the city: e.g. *CTh.* 9.16.7 (9 September), 5.15.16 (12 September), 8.5.21 (29 September) and 1.16.9 (1 October).

45. Crown estates *CTh.* 5.15.6 (12 September), enforcing accurate tax collection *CTh.* 7.4.13.
46. e.g. *CTh.* 10.10.9, 12.1.59 and 12.1.60 (all dated 12 September).
47. Altinum e.g. *CTh.* 9.30.2 (5 October), 9.40.7 (8 October); Verona e.g. *CTh.* 11.31.1 (15 October), 11.36.16 (17 October); Rome *CTh.* 5.15.17 (27 October).
48. *CTh.* 9.42.6, but cf. *CTh.* 11.30.34.
49. *Lib. Or.* 6.81a-6.82d.
50. *Them. Or.* 6.
51. *CTh.* 11.7.9 (24 September).
52. *CTh.* 5.13.3.
53. There is confusion and disagreement over the chronology of this period, especially concerning the dating of the first Alamannic invasion and the Roman response. Other chronologies are possible.
54. This no longer exists, but is mentioned by Libanius: *Ep.* 1495: Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 27–28.
55. In January there were at least nine new laws passed, and in February at least six. For example, *CTh.* 1.15.5, 8.7.8, 9.40.8, 13.5.11, 15.1.14 (Jan.); 8.1.9, 11.12.3, 15.1.15 (Feb.).
56. Tomlin, 'Ammianus Marcellinus 26.4.5–6', p. 471. For further details, see below.
57. For an analysis of the problems surrounding the chronology of the Alamannic invasions of 364–366, see Appendix 1.
58. *AM* 28.6.6.
59. Remigius, *AM* 27.9.1; envoys, 28.6.7.
60. Augustinus *c. Lit. Pet.* 3.25 (29): Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, pp. 73 and 277, n. 84.
61. Tomlin, 'Ammianus Marcellinus 26.4.5–6', p. 471; *AM* 28.6.10.
62. *CTh.* 10.10.10. It is possible that this law represents the first chance for an emperor to respond to the problem arising in 363: Valentinian was the third emperor since that time and neither Julian nor Jovian had had the chance to take action concerning the attack. However, the timing of events suggests that the law was passed following a second attack in 364.
63. Pay, *AM* 28.6.12.
64. Date, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 101.
65. *CAH*, 87.
66. The majority of this section is based upon Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, which is indispensable for studies of Alamannic society.
67. For more information on these 'tribes', see *ibid.*, *passim*, esp. pp. 123 and 173.
68. Mainz, *AM* 29.4.7.
69. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 118; Sarmatians, *AM* 17.12.1; 18.2.13.
70. Red hair and drink, *AM* 16.12.36; 27.2.2; pagan, Agathias, 1.7.1.
71. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 119; *AM* 16.12.23; 16.12.26; 18.2.13.
72. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 120.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 126 and 238.
78. *AM* 18.2.15f.
79. PLRE, *Vadomarius*, 928.
80. *Eun. fr.* 13: PLRE, *Vithicabius*, 971.
81. *AM* 27.10.3.
82. PLRE I, *Ursacius* 3 (984–985); *AM* 26.5.7. Unfortunately, there is no means of accurately dating the embassy.

83. AM 26.5.7. On the role of Ursacius' dealings with the envoys as *magister officiorum*, Lee, *Information and Frontiers*, pp. 41–42.
84. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 150–151, plus references in footnotes, esp. Symm. Or. 2.17.
85. AM 26.5.7.
86. *CTh.* 15.1.3 (19 June 365).
87. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, pp. 268–269, claims late summer/early autumn, but gives no reason for the choice of date.
88. AM 27.1.2.
89. AM 27.1.3–5.
90. AM 26.5.8. Ammianus' claim that the news was reported to Valentinian 'about the first of November as he was approaching Paris' has caused confusion, since the *Codex Theodosianus* notes that Valentinian was already in Paris on 10 October (*CTh.* 10.19.3). Unless Ammianus' guess is three weeks astray, the two sources cannot be reconciled.
91. AM 26.5.8.
92. AM 26.5.10.
93. AM 26.5.12ff.
94. AM 26.5.11.
95. AM 26.5.14.
96. He was Patricius prior to *CTh.* 7.22.7 (13 April 365), where he is addressed as *Petronius patriciam*.
97. AM 26.6.7; PLRE I, *Petronius* 3 (690–691).
98. AM 27.12.2; cf. 27.12.12: Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 168.
99. AM. 26.4.6. On Persian raids into Armenia, see for example, BP 4.21f.
100. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 168.
101. *CTh.* 7.22.7 (13 April 365).
102. Dating, AM 26.6.11, but cf. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 77; making for Antioch, Zos. 4.4.1; Phil. 9.5.
103. AM 26.6.11.
104. AM 26.6.11.
105. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 387, referencing *Lives of Athanasius*.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 387.
107. *Ibid.*, p. 387, referencing Cassian.
108. Them. Or. 113a–114b; 116d = 'enlightened tax policies' (Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 129). Although usually associated with the Procopian rebellion (see next chapter), it is possible that at least some of the remissions of tax were applied to those districts devastated by the earthquake and ensuing tsunami.
109. Caesarea, *CTh.* 12.6.5 (2 November); AM 26.7.2; heatwave, Them. Or. 7.86c; Lib. Ep. 1524; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 77.
110. Date, *Cons. Const.* s.a. 365; AM 26.5.8, 26.6.12f; Them. Or. 791a.
111. Valens considering abdication, AM 26.7.13; cf. Zos. 4.7.3; Soc. 4.3.2.
112. AM 26.7.2.

Chapter 4

1. AM 26.9.11, Procopius died 'at the age of forty years and ten months'.
2. Maternal relative, '*cognatus*', AM 26.6.1; lack of '*agnatic*' connections and analysis, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 69.
3. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, 572–5.
4. Them. Or. 7.86c.
5. AM 17.14.3; 18.6.17–19.
6. AM 23.3.5; 24.8.16–17; Zos. 3.12.5; 4.4.2; Lib. Or. 18.214; 260; Joh. Mal. 13.21.
7. Zos. 4.4.2–3; but cf. AM 23.3.2; 26.6.2; Phil. 9.5. Note also that on his deathbed Julian flatly refused to name a successor: Lib. Or. 18.273; AM 25.3.20; 26.6.3; Aur. Vict. 43.4.

8. AM 25.8.16: cf. 24.7.8; 25.8.7; Lib. *Or.* 18.260.
9. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 71.
10. This may not have been ordered by the emperors but by another official concerned about Procopius' potential threat: conversation with Perry Gray.
11. Zos. 4.4.3–52.
12. 'Fear and hiding', Lib. *Or.* 24.13; Chalcedon, AM 26.6.4–6; Phil. 9.5; 9.8.
13. Lib. *Or.* 24.13; Phil. 9.5; AM 26.6.12.
14. AM 26.6.11
15. AM 27.1.2.
16. On the division of the troops by Valentinian and Valens, and the subsequent use of the epithets seniors and iuniores, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 308–309 and associated notes and bibliography, especially Hoffmann, *Das Spättrömische Bewegungsheer*, Tomlin, 'Seniores-Iuniores in the late Roman Field Army' and Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*.
17. Zos. 4.5.3–4; PLRE I, *Eugenius* 2, p. 292.
18. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 72.
19. AM 26.6.12–13; Zos. 4.5.
20. Date, Cons. Const. s.a. 365; place, AM 26.6.14; night, Them. *Or.* 7.91a-b.
21. AM 26.6.17–18.
22. No garrison, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 72, n. 23.
23. *Ibid.*, 74.
24. Warrants, Them. *Or.* 7.91a-b; Nebridius and Caesarius, AM 25.7.4; Zos. 4.6.2; Them. *Or.* 7.91b.
25. AM 25.7.4; Zos. 4.6.2; Them. *Or.* 7.91b.
26. AM 26.7.5.
27. AM 26.7.5; cf. Zos. 4.6.2.
28. AM 26.7.10.
29. AM 26.7.5; Them. *Or.* 7.92c.
30. Them. *Or.* 7.91d-92a; navy, AM 26.8.8; Zos. 4.6.5.
31. Imposters as Western legates, AM 26.7.3; Them. *Or.* 7.91d; embassies, Them. *Or.* 7.92a.
32. AM 26.7.11–12.
33. AM 26.7.9; 26.7.1; 26.5.7; 26.5.14; 26.8.5; Zos. 4.5.5; 4.7.1; Them. *Or.* 7.86d. The impression is reinforced by the assumption of both Socrates (4.2.6–4.3.1 plus 5.2) and Sozomen (6.7.10–6.8.2), whose belief that Valens heard of the revolt in Antioch implies that the majority of the army was already in place.
34. AM esp. 27.5.1; plus 26.10.3; 27.4.1; 31.3.4; Eun. fr. 37; Zos. 4.7.2; 4.10.1–2.
35. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 78, n. 58.
36. This is implied by their arrival later in the year.
37. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 79, n. 65, referencing Lenski, 'Basil and the Isaurian Uprising of 375', *Phoenix* 53 (1999), 313, n. 21.
38. Preparations for the arrival of Valens, Lib. Ep. 1499; 1505; cf. Petronius sent ahead to Antioch, *CTh.* 7.22.7 (April 365).
39. For example, the revolt of Boudicca in Britain and the Bar-Kochba revolt in Palestine.
40. AM 26.7.2–3; 26.7.13.
41. AM 26.7.13.17; cf. Zos. 4.7.1.
42. AM 26.8.1–2.
43. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 78.
44. AM 26.7.8; Zos. 4.6.4; 4.7.1; Eun. VS, 7.5.2; Soz. 6.8.1; Soc. 4.3.1; Them. *Or.* 7.85d-86a; 9.7d; *Or.* 8.111a.
45. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, pp. 149–150.
46. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 78.
47. *CTh.* 7.4.14 (1 December 365).

48. AM 26.8.2–3.
49. Conversation with Perry Gray.
50. AM 26.8.7–11; cf. Zos. 4.6.4–5.
51. AM 26.8.14.
52. AM 26.8.12: PLRE I, Helpidius 6, 415; *Hormisdas* 3, 443–444.
53. AM 26.8.4; 26.9.1–2.
54. AM 26.8.4–5; PLRE I, *Flavius Arintheus*, 102–103.
55. AM 26.8.5.
56. Valens, AM 26.8.4; Procopius, AM 26.8.11; cf. Phil. 9.6.
57. AM 26.10.4.
58. AM 26.8.14–15; Eun. fr. 34.1.
59. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 79.
60. PLRE I, *Flavius Arbitio* 2, pp. 94–95.
61. e.g. AM 15.3.2; 14.11.2; 15.2.5.
62. AM 26.8.13.
63. Date, *Cons. Const.* s.a. 366; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a.364 (556); Soc. 4.10; Soz. 6.10.1.
64. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 79.
65. AM 26.9.1.
66. AM 26.9.3.
67. Ammianus claims that Arbitio supported Valens, but does not directly state that Arbitio led the troops: 26.8.13–14; 26.9.4–5. Zosimus, however, claims that Arbitio was made *magister militum*: 4.7.4.
68. AM 26.9.6.
69. Zos. 4.8.1; Eun. fr. 34.8; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 80.
70. Zos. 4.7.4.
71. Zos. 4.8.3.
72. AM 26.10.4.
73. Conversation with Perry Gray.
74. cf. AM 26.10.3; 26.10.5.
75. For example, AM 26.9.7; Zos. 4.8.3; Them. *Or.* 7.87b.
76. AM 26.9.7–9; Phil. 9.5.
77. AM 26.10.4; 26.9.9; Phil. 9.5.
78. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 81–82.
79. AM 26.6.1; 26.9.11; Them. *Or.* 7.90b–c.
80. AM 26.10.1; Zos. 4.8.4.
81. AM 26.10.3; 26.10.5; Zos. 4.8.3–4; Eun. fr. 34.10.
82. Them. *Or.* 7.87a–b.
83. Appointments, AM 26.7.4.
84. AM 26.10.8.
85. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 24.
86. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 168–169.
87. The chronology of these events is confused and open to dispute: see Appendix 1.
88. AM 26.5.11.
89. *Cons. Const.* a. 366; AM 27.2.1; 26.9.1.
90. Conversation with Perry Gray.
91. Conversation with Perry Gray.
92. AM 27.2.1.
93. AM 27.2.1
94. For more on the impact of cross-border ‘subsides’, see Fisher, *Between Empires*, p. 72f.
95. AM 27.1.1; 27.2.2; 27.2.4.
96. On other battles in Gaul, see below.
97. AM 27.2.1.
98. On the proposed chronology, see Appendix 1.

99. AM 27.2.1.
100. AM 27.2.2. Various rivers have been suggested, but the most likely location is somewhere along the Moselle. See Rolfe's translation: III, p. 6, n. 3.
101. AM 27.2.2.
102. AM 27.2.3.
103. See Appendix 1.
104. 'Hastily advanced', AM 27.2.4.
105. AM 27.2.9; Ascarii, *Not Dig. Oc.* 5.157.
106. AM 27.2.6.
107. AM 27.2.7.
108. AM 27.2.9.
109. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 269. Valentinian had left Paris by at the latest mid October 365: *CTh.* 11.1.3 (18 October 365); cf. *CTh.* 7.7.1 (28 January 366).
110. AM 27.2.10; *Cons. Const.* a. 367.
111. AM 27.2.10.
112. AM 27.3.11–13; *Coll. Avel.* 1.

Chapter 5

1. For a more detailed analysis of the problems concerning Ammianus' account, plus bibliography, see esp. Tomlin, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"', and Blockley, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy" '.
2. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 117.
3. *CTh.* 7.1.9 (29 January 367).
4. See preceding chapter.
5. 'Bucinobantes' = *auxilia palatina praesentales* = *Not. Dig. Or* 6.17 = 58; but cf. AM 30.3.3. See Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, pp. 170, 304.
6. See Chapter 10.
7. Antioch, Tomlin, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"', p. 306, n. 22.
8. den Boeft et al, 2009, 185.
9. *CTh.* 13.10.5 (3 June 367).
10. See Tomlin, 1974, for the reasons behind this claim.
11. Although the wording in the passage is unclear, the heading of 27.8 clearly states that both were killed, although possibly Fullofaudes was captured before being executed.
12. den Boeft et al., *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXVII*, p. 188.
13. AM 27.8.5.
14. Tomlin, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"', p. 305, amongst others, suggests that the move was due to reports of troubles in Britain, but the later chronology does not appear to allow time for this to be the case.
15. cf. 'This report aroused great horror, and the emperor sent Severus, who at that time was still commander of the household troops, to set right the disasters, if chance should offer the desired opportunity.' AM 27.8.2.
16. The claim in *CAH* (p. 86) that a 'succession of commanders ... proved unable to restore order' is an overstatement of actual events.
17. Although the dating of Severus' promotion is insecure, Ammianus states that in the secret conferences which took place during Valentinian's illness Severus was already *magister peditum* (AM 27.6.3).
18. AM 27.8.1.
19. That the campaign was a success is implied by Theodosius' ability shortly after to transfer troops across the Channel to begin his campaign in Britain. In a panegyric to Emperor Theodosius (*Pan.* 12.5.2), Pacatus claims that Theodosius' father, 'Count' Theodosius, had 'annihilated' the Saxons in naval warfare. It is surprising that Ammianus does not mention this in his account, especially as Ammianus extolled the abilities of

- Theodosius in comparison to Valentinian. Therefore, it is possible either that they were defeated earlier by Jovinus, so allowing Theodosius a clear route to Britain, or later by Theodosius in an unrelated campaign, on which see below.
20. *Coll. Avel.* 11, 12.
 21. This section is based largely upon Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*.
 22. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 120.
 23. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, p. 25.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 27: cf. the Tervingi, as described by Claud. *In Ruf.* 2.26; *SHA, Claud.* 9.6; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 120.
 25. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 120, n. 30.
 26. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, p. 44.
 27. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 120.
 28. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, p. 43f.
 29. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 120.
 30. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, p. 45 and notes.
 31. AM 26.6.11; Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, p. 43. Isidore notes that Athanaric was 'king' for 13 years, 364–376 (*Hist. Goth.* 6.2.69).
 32. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, p. 33.
 33. e.g. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 121f.
 34. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 36. *Lib. Or.* 12.78; 17.30.
 37. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 117; Agathias, 1.7.1.
 38. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 119.
 39. *Ibid.*
 40. Fisher, *Between Empires*, p. 35.
 41. See Chapter 1.
 42. 'Ancestral religion', Soc. 4.33.7; Soz. 6.37.12, cf. Them *Or.* 10.134C.
 43. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, pp. 16–17, plus associated bibliography; *Lib. Or.* 59.89.
 44. *Aux.* 75.27.
 45. *Aux.* 29; *Phil.* 2.5; *Jord. Get.* 6.267.
 46. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, P. 119.
 47. *Zos.* 4.10–4.11.1.
 48. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 127.
 49. *CTh.* 11.17.1 shows that Valens was still in Marcianopolis on 30 May 367.
 50. The most probable position is at Gradistea at south east of Ulmeni, although some historians believe that Daphne was the new name of Sucidava-Celei.
 51. AM 27.5.2; cf. *CTh.*
 52. AM 27.5.3: 'south-east Carpathians', Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 128; Heather, *The Goths*, 86; Siriul and roads, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 128, Siriul n.71.
 53. Conversation with Perry Gray.
 54. AM 27.5.4.
 55. *Zos.* 4.11.2–3.
 56. *Durostorum, CTh.* 10.1.11 and 12.6.14 (25 September 367).
 57. They were to remain loyal to Shapur until after 371: Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 169, n. 91.
 58. BP 4.23.
 59. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 169.
 60. BP 4.24; cf. MX 3.26,28. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 169.
 61. BP 4.50–51; date, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 169.
 62. AM 27.12.3.
 63. AM 27.12.3; BP 5.7; cf. MX 3.35.

64. AM 27.12.5; BP 4.55.
65. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp.170–171.
66. BP 4.55.
67. Marcianople, AM 27.5.4.

Chapter 6

1. For a more detailed discussion of the problems of chronology surrounding Theodosius' campaigns in Britain, see Tomlin, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"' and Blockley, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"'.
2. Zos. 4.24.4.
3. AM 27.8.3.
4. According to Ammianus (27.8.3) there was definitely an interval between Jovinus' return and Theodosius' departure on campaign, but unfortunately the duration is unknown: cf. Blockley, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"', p. 224.
5. AM 27.8.7.
6. AM 27.8.6.
7. Furlough and desertion, AM 27.8.10.
8. Conversation with Perry Gray.
9. Hughes, *Stilicho*, p. 177.
10. That Theodosius immediately travelled to London and ordered the rest of the campaign from the city, see AM 27.8.7. However, it should be noted that alternatives have been suggested, especially by Tomlin, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"' and Blockley, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"'.
11. AM 27.8.7–10.
12. AM 27.10.4.
13. City garrisons, cf. AM 27.10.1–2, where the garrison of Mainz was withdrawn to join the field army.
14. AM 27.10.6.
15. Drinkwater, 2007, 289.
16. The fact that Valentinian sent an advance party is implied by the course of events as recorded by Ammianus.
17. AM 27.10.1–2; Drinkwater, 2007, 286.
18. Based on the approximate dating proposed by Hoffmann, *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia dignitatum*, 1969, 141–143, 159, and 165–168, as referenced in Lenski, 2002, 170, n.168. Lenski notes that the units were used by Theodosius during the British campaign.
19. AM 27.10.4.
20. AM 30.7.7.
21. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 288.
22. AM 27.10.6.
23. AM 27.10.7.
24. AM 27.10.8.
25. For a more detailed analysis of the problem, including viable alternatives, Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 289.
26. AM 27.10.9.
27. AM 27.10.10–11.
28. AM 27.10.12f.
29. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, pp. 288–289.
30. AM 27.10.16–17.
31. This began as a voluntary gift collected to pay for a golden crown given to those generals who celebrated a 'Triumph'. Later it became an obligatory tax paid on the 'five-year' celebrations of emperors.
32. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 129.

33. See Chapter 3, n. 71.
34. Them. *Or.* 114c-115a; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 129.
35. Them. *Or.* 8.117a; Heather and Matthews, *The Goths in the Fourth Century*, p. 29, n. 59, suggest that this reference may be to the uprising of Mavia, 'Queen of the Saracens'. Although a possibility, it should be noted that Mysia is a very long way from the desert borders in the east.
36. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 185–186.
37. cf. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 59.
38. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 171.
39. AM 28.2.11–14; described by Lib. *Or.* 48.36; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 197.
40. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 130.
41. AM 27.5.5.
42. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 130.
43. e.g. Soz. 6.21.3–6.
44. An inscription found in Romania, *CIL* 3. 06159; *CIL* 3. 07494 = ILS 770, from Cius (Girliciu), Moesia Inferior, is evidence of Valens' building programme.
45. *CTh.* 15.1.13 (364/365).
46. For a closer analysis of the building programmes, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 375f; also Chapter 7 and Appendix A (375f).
47. On the dating of the forts, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 204, esp. n. 278.
48. *DRB* 20; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 127.
49. *DRB praef.* 10.1.4; 20.1; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 376 plus notes.
50. Conversation with Perry Gray.
51. AM 27.9.6–7.
52. Eun. fr. 43 (Blockley).
53. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 198–199 and associated notes.

Chapter 7

1. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 32.
2. *CTh.* 8.5.25; for more detail on Symmachus' career, PLRE I, Symmachus 4, 865–870.
3. Symm. *Or.* 1; cf. Them. *Or.* 6. The dating of Symmachus' mission to 369 relies on the fact that a *quinquennalia* can be celebrated at any time during the emperor's 'fifth' year, with Valentinian receiving the oration at the end of his 'year' in January or early February 369. For further information, see Saylor, *Symmachus*, n. 1. It would appear that the two emperors celebrated their five-year anniversary at different dates, possibly with Valens celebrating before Valentinian. It should be noted that the *quinquennalia* would also be held for every multiple of five years, so on the fifth, tenth, fifteenth anniversary.
4. *CTh.* 9.42.7 (5 May 369); 11.29.4 (10 May 369); 11.26.1 (14 May 369); 13.5.12 (14 May 369).
5. The explanation given here is based upon Drinkwater's analysis of the campaign (*The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 289f), based on Symm. *Or.* 2.
6. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 291.
7. Symm. *Or.* 2.10.
8. *CTh.* 11.31.4.
9. Possibly Ladenburg, Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 292.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
11. *PLRE I*, *Hortarius 1* and *Hortarius 2*, 444. This may be Hortarius' son, also named Hortarius.
12. The link between Hortarius and Macrianus is specified by Ammianus, 29.4.7.
13. *CIL* 6. 1699 = *CIL* 6. 31903 = ILS 2946. Related to the Alta Ripa campaign, Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 32.
14. cf. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 375f.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 376.

16. Symm. *Or.* 2.31.
17. AM 28.2.1.
18. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 305.
19. AM 28.2.1–4.
20. ‘Befestigte Schiffsländen (‘fortified beaching areas for ships’), interpreted by Drinkwater as being ‘observation posts capable of being supplied by the restored fleet.’ Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 295f.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 295f.
22. River patrols, AM 35.5.3: *Not. Dig. Or* 35, 36, 39, 40; *CTh.7.17* (28 January 412, Constantinople): Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 136.
23. Breisach, *CTh.6.35.8* (30 August 369).
24. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 96.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
26. AM 28.2.5.
27. As this region was along the northern border with the Alamanni, it is possible that this area was controlled by Macrianus, and that the hostages were given as part of the treaty.
28. AM 28.2.5–9.
29. The only date obtainable in the various accounts for this episode is that of the *Chronicon Paschale*, s.a. 369. For further information on Severa and Justina, see PLRE I, ‘*Marina Severa 2*’ (828) and ‘*Justina*’ (488–489).
30. *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 369 (p. 559); Joh. Mal. 339.20–341.7; John of Nikiu 82.11–14.
31. For a discussion of these events, see Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality*, pp. 123–125.
32. John of Nikiu 82.13–14.
33. See below: AM 28.2.10.
34. Trier, *CTh.9.37.2* (14 October 369).
35. For a more detailed analysis of the causes of the alliance with the Burgundians, see Chapter 8.
36. *CAH*, 84.
37. Symm. *Or.* 2.13 assumes a Burgundian alliance for 370; cf. AM 28.5.11; Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, pp. 32 and 305.
38. AM 28.2.10.
39. cf. AM 28.1.8, as translated by JC Rolfe.
40. AM 28.1.8–9.
41. AM 27.8.10. The exact chronology for Theodosius’ campaigns in Britain is impossible to restore, as neither Ammianus nor any other contemporary source give times and dates for events, and details are few. What follows is an attempt to reconstruct a feasible chronology and sequence of events. Alternative chronologies are available – e.g. Tomlin, ‘The Date of the “Barbarian Conspiracy”’, and Blockley, ‘The Date of the “Barbarian Conspiracy”’. See also the previous chapter.
42. AM 28.3.8.
43. AM 28.3.4.
44. AM 28.3.7. On the problems concerning ‘Valentia’, see Hind, ‘The British “Provinces” of Valentia and Orcades’, pp. 101–111.
45. AM 28.3.9. The reasons behind the appointment given by Ammianus may reflect his high opinion of Theodosius rather than be an accurate commentary on Valentinian’s ‘poor opinion’ of Jovinus.
46. Them. *Or.* 9, especially the dedication, and 123c (Marcianople), 120c–121a (Victor): Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 131.
47. AM 27.12.9.
48. AM 27.12.10: Ammianus makes no mention of Addeus, but P’awstos gives the name ‘Ade’, which is probably Addeus; Baynes, ‘Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century’, p. 638.

49. AM 27.12.10.
50. AM 27.5.6; Them. *Or.* 10. 132c and 133b; cf. *CTh.* 10.16.2 (5 July 369).
51. Commander, Wolfram, *History of the Goths*; appointed against the Huns, see Chapter 14.
52. AM 27.5.6.
53. AM 27.5.7; Them *Or.* 10.133a; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 132.
54. On the date, den Boeft et al., *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXVII*, pp. 122–124.
55. ‘An officer whose duty it was to receive the decision of the emperor on any subject and communicate it to the public or the persons concerned’: WA Smith, *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (London: 1875); http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA*/Magister.html.
56. Although some historians have claimed that Eutropius – and later Festus – were responsible for ‘dictating’ policy to Valens, recent work by Lenski has demonstrated that this is unlikely to have been the case: Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 186f.
57. On the ramifications of these works, see *ibid.*, p. 186.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 133.
59. AM 27.12.10.
60. AM 27.12.11; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 172.
61. AM 27.12.11.
62. BP 4.55.
63. BP 4.55–59; 5.1; MX 3.36; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 172.

Chapter 8

1. This account of the trials is based upon AM 28.1.1–56.
2. cf. *CTh.* 9.38.3 (5 May 367/369); *CTh.* 9.38.4 (June 6 368/370); *CTh.* 9.19.4 (16 April 376).
3. cf. *CTh.* 16.10.1 (March 321).
4. *CTh.* 16.10.7 (December 381); *haruspices* etc. 16.10.9 (May 385).
5. He was still *praefectus annonae* on 19 March 370 (*CTh.* 14.17.6).
6. AM 28.1.11.
7. *CTh.* 9.35 (8 July 369).
8. AM 28.1.12.
9. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, pp. 57–59.
10. Matthews, 1998, p. 49.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 61–63.
12. AM 28.5.8–10.
13. On Rando, see Chapter 6.
14. On Mons Piri and Hortarius’ connections with Macrianus, see Chapter 7.
15. On exposed defences, Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 305.
16. See also Chapter 7.
17. AM 28.2.10; see also Chapter 7.
18. AM 28.5.11.
19. AM 25.5.11–12.
20. AM 28.5.12; cf. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 283.
21. AM 28.5.13. The claim by modern authors that the Burgundians killed their hostages is speculation.
22. AM 28.5.15. On the problems of dating, see Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 286f. See also Chapter 9.
23. Windisch, Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 294.
24. Ausonius, *Mosella*, p. 424; *Epig.* 28, esp. 31; Symm. *Or.* 2.24, 2.30.
25. The majority of this section is based upon Greg. Naz. *Or.* 43.54–55, 68; Greg. Nys. *Eun.* 1.139–141; Greg. Nys. *In laud Bas.* 14: Soz. 6.16.1–3; 6.16.8–10; Theod. 4.19.7–11.
26. For example, Soz. 6.16.1–3.

27. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 253–254.
28. Ruf. 11.9; Soc. 4.26.23; Soz. 6.16.1–10; Theod. 19.8.
29. Bas. *Eps.* 99, 105, 132, 148–149, 152–153, 179, 214–216; cf. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 253–254.
30. AM 27.5.9.
31. AM 27.5.8–9; Zos. 4.11.4; Them. *Or.* 10.134a.
32. For suggestion that Athanaric was not allowed to cross the Danube because of the terms of his office, see Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 65; Schwarcz, ‘Cult and Religion among the Tervingi and the Visigoths and their Conversion to Christianity’, p. 455; oath not to invade the empire, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 126f.
33. On the date, den Boeft et al, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXVII*, p. 124; cf. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 134 and 173 for an alternate date.
34. den Boeft et al, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXVII*, p. 124.
35. Them. *Or.* 10.135b; Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 59.
36. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 135–137.
37. See Conclusion.
38. Themistius (*Or.* 10.135) emphasizes the fact that Valens has halted the payment of money to the barbarians.
39. See above, and Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 59; ‘*Gothicus Maximus*’, *ILS 77: Domini nostri Imperatores Caesares / Fl(avius) Valentinianus Pius Felix maximus victor ac triumph(ator) semper Aug(ustus) pontif(ex) maximus / Germanic(us) max(imus) Alamann(icus) max(imus) Franc(icus) max(imus) Gothic(us) max(imus) trib(unicia) pot(estate) VII imp(erator) VI cons(ul) II p(roconsul) p(ater) p(atriae) et / Fl(avius) Valens Pius Felix max(imus) victor ac triumph(ator) semper Aug(ustus) pontif(ex) maximus / Germanic(us) max(imus) Alamann(icus) max(imus) Franc(icus) max(imus) Gothic(us) max(imus) trib(unicia) pot(estate) VII imp(erator) VI cons(ul) II p(roconsul) p(ater) p(atriae) et / Fl(avius) Gratianus Pius Felix max(imus) victor ac triumph(ator) semper Aug(ustus) pontif(ex) maximus / Germanic(us) max(imus) Alamann(icus) max(imus) Franc(icus) max(imus) Gothic(us) max(imus) trib(unicia) pot(estate) II imp(erator) II cons(ul) primum p(roconsul) p(ater) p(atriae) / pontem felicitis nominis Gratiani in usum senatus ac populi Romani constitui dedicarique iusserunt*
40. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 59.
41. Epiph. *ad haeres.* 3.1.15; Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 69; Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, pp. 20–21.
42. Schwarcz, ‘Cult and Religion among the Tervingi and the Visigoths and their Conversion to Christianity’, p. 454; cf. Heather and Matthews, *The Goths in the Fourth Century*, p. 125.
43. Soz. 6.33.7.
44. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 69; cf. *Passio San. Saba* ch. 3, p. 217.
45. AM 27.12.13. Ammianus claims that Arintheus was sent in case a second campaign was launched by Shapur, but the chronology is detrimental to the claim.
46. cf. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 174.
47. See Chapter 7.
48. AM 27.12.14; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 173.
49. AM 27.12.15.
50. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 174: for example, in 370, 373 and 377 he spent at least part of his time at Hierapolis; in 373 he also travelled to Edessa, and spent further time at Caesarea (for details and references, see Lenski).
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 312–315.
52. Soc. 4.14.1; Soz. 6.13.1; Zos. 4.11.4.

53. AM 27.12.16.
54. AM 27.12.16.
55. AM 27.12.17.
56. On the dating, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 197; AM 28.2.11–14; see also Chapter 6.
57. Lib. *Or.* 48.36, referenced at Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 197.
58. AM 27.12.18; 29.1.1: BP 5.4: vita Nerses 11 (pp. 34–35). cf. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 174, who claims that Urnayr was king of the Huns.
59. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 174–175.
60. CTh. 7.13.16 (18 September 370 – Hierapolis); Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 310–311; Them. *Or.* 11.149b, noting that shortly afterwards Valens had four major armies stationed in the east facing the Persians, apart from those stationed in the Balkans to deter renewed attacks from across the Danube.
61. *Const. Cons.* s.a. 370; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 370; Soc. 4.16.7–17.1. On the dating and severity of the famine, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 388–389.
62. cf. Greg. Naz. *Or.* 16.10; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, 390.
63. *Not. urb. Cons T.* 6.16.
64. Port, Them. *Or.* 11.150c; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 388–389.
65. CTh. 13.5.14 (11 February 371, Constantinople).

Chapter 9

1. AM 28.1.25.
2. CJ 6.22.7 (7 August 371); AM 28.1.41.
3. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, pp. 61–63.
4. For example, Seeck dates the attempt to capture Macrianus to May 372, based largely on the *Codex Theodosianus*: Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 285.
5. AM 29.4.2. The events of 371–374 are, on the whole, not accurately dated, so opinions can differ.
6. Possible date to 372; however, the earlier date is preferred to allow for the developments outlined later in the chapter. See Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 286; CAH 85.
7. AM 29.4.5–6.
8. AM 29.4.7; cf. PLRE *Fraomarius*, 372.
9. 372: CAH, 84–85.
10. The concept that this region of Alamannic control was unhappy is reinforced by the events in Gratian's rule, when the Lentienses attacked the Empire: 377–378.
11. AM 28.5.15
12. On the problems of using Armenian sources in conjunction with Western sources, see the introduction.
13. For a more detailed examination of the problems, see the Introduction.
14. The Battle description which follows is taken from P'awstos Buzandac'i's (5.4) and Moses Khorenats'i (3.37). Although Western commentators describe these sources as exaggerating the effectiveness of the Armenian forces, it should be noted that they are internally consistent and there is a growing acceptance of their accuracy amongst Armenian historians: conversation with Armen Ayvazyan. Ammianus calls the Battle 'Vagabanta': AM 29.1.3.
15. AM 29.1.3.
16. BP 5.4.
17. It should be noted that all numbers quoted suggest that Armenian resources were far greater than is usually accepted – see n. 14.
18. E.g., the Battle of Callinicum: Hughes, *Belisarius*, p. 59f.
19. BP 5.4.
20. MX 3.37.
21. BP 5.4.
22. This is nowhere more apparent than in the notes accompanying the translations of the

- different sources, and in the secondary sources. For example, the translation of Moses Khorenatz'i, p. 298, nn. 11–12; BP 5.4; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 175, n.123.
23. Although this may distort the chronology a little, the lack of clarity and the uncertainty surrounding events post 371 means that little is lost by combining the battles, whereas much clarity is gained.
 24. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 175 and accompanying notes.
 25. AM 29.1.2–3.
 26. AM 29.1.4; BP 5.5; 5.8–19; MX 3.37.
 27. It should be noted that this account is rather confused. Unable to read Armenian, it has been necessary to rely on Bedrosian's translation, which may have contributed somewhat to the confusion: conversation with Dr Armen Ayvazyan.
 28. Joh. Mal. 13.29.
 29. Seven-year truce, Joh. Mal. 13.30; cf. AM 29.2.21; 29.1.4; 30.4.1.
 30. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 175.
 31. AM 29.1.4.
 32. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 312–315.
 33. Joh. Mal. 13.29.
 34. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 175.
 35. BP 5.7, 5.37.
 36. BP 5.37.
 37. e.g. Jones, *The Decline of the Ancient World*, p. 64.
 38. e.g. Soc. 4.2; 4.6; 4.15 etc.; Soz. 6.13; 6.18 etc.

Chapter 10

1. Dating: 372 = *PLRE I*, *Fraomarius*, 372–373; Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 286.
2. AM 29.4.2–7.
3. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 309; cf. Symm. *Or.* 2.10, 14.
4. AM 29.4.7.
5. cf. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 309.
6. Date of unit to 365–368, Hoffmann, cited in Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 285. Although Hoffmann's theory is well argued, there are many inconsistencies within the Notitia and a later date for the creation of the Bucinobantes remains a possibility.
7. See Chapter 7: Hortarius and Bitheridus also sent to Britain, *PLRE I*, *Fraomarius*, 372.
8. AM 29.4.7.
9. *Pan. Lat.* 12.5.2 (Pacatus, *Pan. Theod.* 5.2); Nixon and Rodgers, *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors*, p. 519. Although it is sometimes assumed that this victory is ascribed to the younger Theodosius, the context clearly states that it applied to the elder.
10. cf. AM 29.6.2. For fuller discussion, see Chapter 11.
11. It would take time for Firmus both to arrange for the assassination of Sammac and secure his own succession. Furthermore, both Firmus and Romanus then sent envoys to court to seek Valentinian's support (see below). This was a drawn-out affair, lasting for at least six months, if not more. This implies that Nubel had died at some point either in 371 or very early in 372, giving time for the accession, the assassination, and for several messages and replies to be sent back and forth across the Mediterranean.
12. AM 29.5.2.
13. Gildo, AM 29.5.6; Mazuca, AM 29.5.40–41; Mascezel and Dius, AM 29.5.11; Firmus, AM 29.5.1ff. For further information on Gildo and Mascezel, see Hughes, *Stilicho*, p. 101f.
14. AM 29.5.2 (Zammar). On the other names, see *PLRE I*, *Sammac*, 801.
15. Cyria, AM 29.5.28.
16. Serving in the army, Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641*, p. 82; AM 29.5; see also den Boeft, et al, *Ammianus After Julian*, p. 135: see further below.

17. AM 29.5.2.
18. AM 29.5.28; cf. *PLRE I, Firmus 3*, 340.
19. AM 29.5.2; Zos. 4.16.3. On taxes, cf. Zos. 4.16.3.
20. AM 29.5.2.
21. See Chapter 3.
22. AM 29.5.2.
23. Donatist support, Aug. *c. lit. Pet.* 3.25.29; Aug. *Ep. Parm.* 1.10(16)–11(17); *Ep.* 87.10. Dispute, den Boeft et al., *Ammianus After Julian*, p. 137f; law, *CTh.* 16.6.1 (20 February 373, Trier).
24. See Chapter 3.
25. den Boeft et al., *Ammianus After Julian*, p. 130.
26. Although the rebellion is sometimes dated to 373, this would appear unlikely. Theodosius was to be despatched to face Firmus in Spring 373, and this does not allow time for the news to arrive at court and for Valentinian to make the appointments necessary.
27. AM 29.5.20: these units were later punished for their role in the rebellion.
28. AM 29.5.20.
29. Gsell, *Inscriptions Latines de l'Algérie*, I 253.
30. cf. Firmus 'took the imperial diadem': Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 73.
31. Reassembly of *CTh.* 6.7.1, 6.9.1, 6.11.1, 6.14.1 and 6.22.4; Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 39.
32. e.g. *CTh.* 13.1.9 and 13.9.1 (June 372, Beirut).
33. *Passio s. Sabae*, passim; Heather and Matthews, *The Goths in the Fourth Century*, pp. 102–110 (including commentary).
34. Heather and Matthews, *The Goths in the Fourth Century*, p. 103.
35. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 70.
36. *Soz.* 6.37.8. The exact nature of Fritigern's beliefs is impossible to determine.
37. On the dating of events, see Chapter 11.
38. BP 3.8–19.
39. cf. *Them. Or.* 11.149d–150a.
40. On the Romans remaining 'neutral', Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, 170f.
41. BP 5.8–19 suggests that in some cases military campaigns were necessary to ensure the return of some areas to allegiance to Pap.
42. BP 5.23–24; 5.29.
43. Conversation with Armen Ayvazyan, referencing e.g. J. Markwart, *Sudarmenien und die Tigrisquellen nach griechischen und arabischen Geographen* (Wien: 1930), p. 157. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to acquire a copy of this book.
44. BP 5.29–31
45. Pap a Zoroastrian, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 180.
46. See below, Chapter X.
47. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 178.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
49. *Them. Or.* 11.149d–150a.
50. BP 5.32; cf. *MX* 3.39.
51. AM 30.1.2–3.
52. Famine, Ephraim/Ephrem, *Carmen Nisibenum*, 29.25–37; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 390.
53. *Pallad. Hist. Laus.* 40.1–4; *Chron. Edes.* no. 30 (a. 684 = AD 373).

Chapter 11

1. Please note that the description which follows is based upon Ammianus and the location of many of the places in the text is unknown: see Map 24.
2. Appointment, AM 29.6.15.

3. Hoffmann, *Das Spättrömische Bewegungsheer*, I, 425–436) notes that sixteen units of *iuniores*, who would be expected to be in the East, were serving in the West according to the *Notitia Dignitatum*. He posits that these were returned post-369. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 311, agrees with this theory and suggests that the most appropriate date for their deployment to the West was to act as the new garrison in Illyricum, replacing the troops that Theodosius took to Africa after the rebellion of 372. He also notes that at this time the East was at peace. See also Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 311, n. 297.
4. CTh.7.22.8 (16 February 372, Rome); 12.1.78 (16 May 372, Poetovio).
5. Pannonia and Upper Moesia, Zos. 4.16.3; ‘court troops’, AM 29.5.4.
6. AM 29.5.29
7. Matthews, ‘Symmachus and the “Magister Militum” Theodosius’, p. 124.
8. AM 29.5.7: finally joined by troops who had been ‘delayed by the long sea voyage’.
9. AM 29.5.3.
10. AM 29.5.6; ‘Vicarius’, *PLRE I*, *Vincentius* 5, 966.
11. AM 29.5.7.
12. AM 28.5.5–7.
13. AM 28.6.29.
14. AM 28.6.28–30: *PLRE I*, *Romanus* 3, 768.
15. AM 29.5.7.
16. AM 29.5.8.
17. AM 29.5.9.
18. AM 29.5.10.
19. AM 29.5.11.
20. AM 29.5.11.
21. AM 29.5.12–13.
22. AM 29.5.14.
23. AM 29.5.15–16.
24. AM 29.5.17.
25. AM 29.5.18.
26. AM 29.5.19.
27. AM 29.5.20.
28. AM 29.5.20.
29. AM 29.5.21; Rolfe, III, 259, n. 4.
30. AM 29.5.22; ‘decimation’, or ‘running the gauntlet’, Rolfe, III, 260, n.1.
31. AM 29.5.22.
32. AM 29.5.23.
33. AM 29.5.24.
34. AM 29.5.25.
35. AM 29.5.27.
36. AM 29.5.27–28.
37. AM 29.5.29.
38. AM 29.5.29–30.
39. AM 29.5.31.
40. *Pan. Lat.* 12.5.2 (Pacatus, *Pan. Theod.* 5.2): Nixon *et al.* 1994, 519.
41. AM 29.6.2; 29.6.4. The dating of the deputation is difficult and may refer to events in 373.
42. This is implied by Ammianus (29.6.2–3), where the ‘natives’ are in the right to complain about the building work, which had stopped when Aequitius was *magister armorum per Illyricum*.
43. AM 29.6.3.
44. AM 29.6.4.
45. Them. *Or.* 11.14.9b.
46. See above.

47. See previous chapter.
48. Famine easing, Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 40.1–4; *Chron. Edes.* no. 30 (a. 684 = AD 373).
49. AM 30.1.1–7. The dating of these events is extremely problematic. Although the arrest could have been attempted at any time between 373 and 374, the date of 373 has been accepted due to the time needed for messages to travel between Traianus in Armenia and Valens in the East, as well as for plans to be made and put into effect.
50. AM 30.1.4.
51. AM 30.1.5.
52. AM 30.1.7.
53. AM 30.1.8–9.
54. AM 30.1.11.
55. AM 30.1.12.
56. AM 30.1.13–15.
57. AM 30.1.16–17.
58. AM 30.1.18.
59. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 179.
60. AM 30.1.18.
61. AM 30.1.18; cf. 31.7.1–2 (Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 180).
62. For details of the complex issues surrounding the death of Athanasius and the succession crisis in Alexandria, see Theod. 4.21.1–4.22.36; Epiph. *Ad haeres.* 68.11.4–8; 69.13.3; 73.38.1; Greg. Naz. *Or.* 2.5.12–14; 2.33.3–4; 2.43.46; Ruf. 1 1.3; Soc. 4.20.1–4.22.6; Soz. 6.19.1–6.20.5; Suid. Ø 764; Jac. Ed. P.298; Theoph. 5865–5866.
63. *Hist. Aceph.* 5.10.
64. *CTh.* 12.1.63 (26 January 373).
65. See further Chapter 14.
66. See Chapter 10.
67. Jones, *Decline of the Ancient World*, p. 65.
68. Soc. 4.21.1–14; Soz. 6.19.2; Theod. 4.21.3; 4.22.10; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 243.
69. Soc. 4.21; Soz. 6.19.
70. Soc. 4.21; Soz. 6.19.
71. Epiph. *ad haeres.* 68.11.6; Greg. Naz. *Or.* 25.12: 43.46; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 256.
72. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 256.
73. Ruf. 1 1.6; Greg. Naz. *Or.* 33; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 256.
74. *Chron. Edes.* No. 31; Theod. 4.16.1–3; *Chron. ad annum* 846, p.201; Jac. Ed. *Chron.* p.298; Theoph. a.m. 5866.
75. *Itin. Eg.*; cf. Bas. *Eps.* 132; Theod. 4.13.2–3; Theoph. a.m. 5866; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 257.
76. Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 373; cf. Jones, *The Decline of the Ancient World*, p. 49.

Chapter 12

1. AM 30.3.1.
2. AM 30.3.3.
3. AM 30.1.3; Gallic reinforcements sent to the Danube, AM 29.6.16.
4. AM 29.6.3–4.
5. AM 29.6.5.
6. AM 29.6.6–7.
7. AM 29.6.8.
8. AM 29.6.9–11.
9. Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 372.
10. AM 29.6.12.
11. AM 29.6.13; Pannonicians, *Not. Dig. Oc.* V 6 = 149; Moesiaci (Moesiciaci), *Not. Dig. Oc.* V 7 = 150.

12. Implied by Ammianus' comments at AM 29.6.15.
13. AM 29.6.15.
14. AM 29.6.16.
15. 'The more pressure Valentinian put upon Macrianus, the more powerful Macrianus became' – Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 308.
16. See Chapter 7.
17. On Valentinian using the earlier treaty between Valens and Athanaric as a model, Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 59.
18. AM 30.3.4.
19. AM 30.3.4–5.
20. 'Protracted', *CAH* 85.
21. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 59; Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641*, p. 82; Them. Or. 10.135b; cf. Julian *Caesares* 329a.
22. Them. Or. 10.205–206.
23. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 308.
24. AM 30.3.7.
25. AM 29.5.32–33.
26. AM 29.5.32–34.
27. AM 29.5.37.
28. AM 29.5.38.
29. AM 29.5.39.
30. AM 29.5.40–42.
31. AM 29.5.43.
32. AM 29.5.44.
33. AM 29.5.45.
34. AM 29.5.46.
35. AM 29.5.47.
36. AM 29.5.48.
37. AM 29.5.49.
38. AM 29.5.49.
39. AM 29.5.50.
40. AM 29.5.50.
41. AM 29.5.51–52.
42. AM 29.5.53–55.
43. Death of Mascezel, Zos. 4.11.4–5; Oros. 7.36.13. For more on the rebellion of Gildo, see Hughes, *Stilicho*, p. 101f.
44. Theod. 4.14.1–7; Greg Naz. Or. 33.5; Bas. *Eps.* 243; Theoph. a.m. 5864.
45. AM 30.1.17. See also previous chapter.
46. AM 30.1.18; cf 31.7.1–2 (Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 180).
47. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 180f. Dating, PLRE 1, *Papa*, 665–666. After the death of Pap Terentius was recalled to service, which cannot have been prior to 375: Bas. *Eps.* 214 (Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 180, n. 149). The tone of Basil's letter to Terentius implies that Terentius had been removed from command for a reasonable length of time and was only now being recalled to service: 'you after once giving up the anxieties of official life, and allowing yourself leisure for the care of your soul, should again be forced back into your old career'.
48. AM 30.1.18–21.
49. MX 3.39.
50. The Armenian original of Pavstos' *History of Armenia* uses the term 'king/kingdom of the Greeks': conversation with Armen Ayvazyan.
51. On religion being a factor, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 181.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

53. On the dating of the Persian-Kushan War see also Chapter 13.

Chapter 13

1. AM 30.5.1.
2. AM 30.5.2.
3. AM 30.5.2.
4. For another example of such executions, see Chapter 6.
5. AM 30.5.3–11.
6. Symm. *Or.* 4.10.
7. AM 30.5.11.
8. North-western flank, *CAH*, 85.
9. South-eastern flank, *CAH*, 85.
10. AM 30.5.13.
11. AM 30.5.14.
12. AM 30.5.14–15.
13. AM 30.5.16.
14. AM 30.5.17.
15. AM 30.5.16.
16. AM 30.5.19.
17. AM 30.6.1–2.
18. AM 30.6.2.
19. AM 30.6.4–6; for the claim that Valentinian was 55, see *CAH*, 86.
20. AM 30.10.1–2.
21. According to Matthews, 'summoned by secret letters', *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 64.
22. Jones, *The Decline of the Ancient World*, p. 67.
23. AM 30.10.2–3; Association of Equitius, Zos. 4.19.1; *Epit. De Caes.* 46.10.
24. AM 30.10.2–3; Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 64.
25. AM 30.10.4.
26. AM 30.10.5; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 375; Soc. 4.31.7; Soz. 6.36.5; Amb. *De ob. Val.* 59; Aur. Vict. *Epit.* 45.10; Zos. 4.19.1; Phil. 9.16; PLRE I, 934–935, *Flavius Valentinianus* 8.
27. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, pp. 25–26.
28. cf. *Ibid.* p. 26.
29. AM 30.6.10.
30. Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641*, p. 81.
31. AM 30.10.6.
32. Eun. *fr.* 42; Phil. 9.16.
33. On Philostorgius hating Gratian, Walford, *Epitome of the Ecclesiastical History of Philostorgius*, n. 172.
34. Zos. 4.20.1–2; casualties, Eun. *fr.* 43.4 (Blockley); Bas. *Caes. Eps.* 200, 215, 217.
35. Lycia, Zos. 4; quote, Bas. *Caes. Ep.* 215.
36. Bas. *Caes. Ep.* 200.
37. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 200, referencing RRAM 637, 639, 648–651, 655 and 660 (French, D. [ed.]) *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor* [Oxford: 1988]).
38. AM 30.2.2.
39. AM 30.2.3.
40. CTh.7.13.7 (2 June 375, Antioch).
41. Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 375.
42. Date, Baynes, 'Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century', p. 641.
43. AM 30.2.3; implications, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 182.
44. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 260.
45. Hypsinus of Parnassus, Bas. *Eps.* 237; Gregory of Nyssa, Bas. *Eps.* 225, 231, 232, 237 and 239; Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 72, 74; Greg. Byz. *V Macrinae* 2.192 (GNO 81.1: 394); *Ep.* 18

Chapter 14

1. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 27: cf. AM 30.10.6.
2. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 357.
3. Oros. 7.33–37; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 376.
4. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 64, n. 3.
5. Nixon and Rodgers, *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors*, p. 519.
6. ‘Theodosius, father of the Theodosius who was later Emperor, and many nobles slain’: Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 376’ cf. Amb. *De ob. Theod.* 53. Confusion between Theodosius and Theodorus, PLRE I, Theodosius 3, p. 904.
7. Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 376: cf. claim that Theodosius was killed in 377; Oros. 7.33.7.
8. Zos. 4.19.2.
9. For more on Merobaudes, see Chapter 15.
10. For a brief overview of Sebastianus’ career, PLRE I, Sebastianus 2, 812–813.
11. Symm. *Or.* 4.10.
12. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 66.
13. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 121; cf. p. 278, n. 8 and CTh.8.5.35 (20 April 378).
14. CTh.9.1.13, 11 February 376.
15. CTh.9.35.3, 4 January 377.
16. Ruf. 11.13; *Epit. De Caes.* AM 31.10.18’ Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 193.
17. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 123.
18. See Chapter 5.
19. AM 30.2.4.
20. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 317.
21. See below.
22. For example, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 182–183.
23. See Chapter 10.
24. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 70.
25. Soc. 4.33.1–4.
26. Schwarcz., ‘Cult and Religion among the Tervingi and the Visigoths and their Conversion to Christianity’, pp. 454–455.
27. Soz. 6.37.6f.
28. cf Athanaric’s earlier defeat by Valens in 369: Chapter 7.
29. AM 31.3f. This section relies heavily on the analysis by Heather, *Goths and Romans*, p. 136f.
30. AM 31.3.2.
31. Heather, *Goths and Romans*, p. 136; AM 31.3.2–3.
32. AM 31.3.3.
33. AM 31.3.1–3.
34. AM 31.3.3.
35. AM 31.3.4.
36. AM 31.3.5.
37. AM 31.3.6–7; Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, pp. 70–71.
38. AM 31.3.7–8.
39. AM 31.3.8.
40. Heather, *The Visigoths*, p. 47.
41. ‘Special relationship’, Soz. 6.37.6–8; AM 31.4.1, 31.4.8, 31.5.5; Eun. *fr.* 55.
42. Eun. *fr.* 42; CAH 98.
43. AM 31.3.8–31.4.1: Eun. *fr.* 42; Zos. 4.20.5; Jord. *Get.* 131; Soc. 4.34.1; Soz. 6.37.5–6.
44. AM 31.4.1, ‘under the leadership of Alavivus’: cf. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 72.

45. See Chapter 8.
46. AM 31.4.12–13.
47. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 158.
48. Soz. 6.37.5–6.
49. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 60.
50. AM 31.4.4–5.
51. Eun. fr. 42.
52. For full discussion, Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 118.
53. *Dediticii*: ‘Members of a community that, having been vanquished in war by Rome, has surrendered unconditionally to the hegemony of the Roman people (*deditio*), and may by a decree of Rome have forfeited its existence as a state. Thus *dediticii* were all provincial inhabitants (*provinciales*) whose community had been dissolved by Rome (Gai. Inst. 1,14): *Brill Online* (<http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/brill-s-new-paully/dediticii-e312600?s.num=8>).
54. AM 31.4.1; Eun. frs. 42, 45.3; Zos. 4.20.5; 4.26.2; Soz. 6.37.16; Soc. 4.34.3–4.
55. AM 31.4.4.
56. AM 31.4.4.
57. ‘Special relationship’, AM 31.4.1; 31.5.5; Eun. fr. 55; ‘federate’, Schwarcz, ‘Cult and Religion among the Tervingi and the Visigoths and their Conversion to Christianity’, p. 455.
58. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 60.
59. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 117.
60. AM 31.4.12–31.5.3; Eun. frs. 42, 45.3; Zos. 4.20.6; 4.26.2; Jord. *Get.* 132; Soz. 6.36.6; Soc. 4.39.2.
61. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 61; *Moesia Thraciam and Dacia Ripensis*, Prosp. 1161.
62. ‘The Goths, fleeing across the Danube, were received by Valens without the negotiation of any treaty and they did not even give over their arms to the Romans’ (Oros. 7.33); cf. Prosp. 1161.
63. Eun. fr. 42; Zos. 4.20.6.
64. Eun. fr. 42.
65. AM 31.4.9. It is interesting that Rolfe (III, p. 406, n. 1) suggests that Ammianus has forgotten that the Goths were required to disarm.
66. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 61.
67. AM 31.4.6; cf. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 323–324.
68. Eun. fr. 42; cf. AM 30.2.6; 31.6.1–2. Sent East, AM 31.16.8; Zos. 4.26.1–3.
69. e.g. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, pp. 117–118 – but note that Wolfram then explains why the situation of 376 differed from that of 359.
70. Soc. 4.34.4–5; Soz. 6.37.16.
71. AM 31.4.5.
72. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, p. 61.
73. AM 31.4.8.
74. AM 31.4.8.
75. Jul. *Mis.* 369a–b: see Chapter 3.
76. AM 31.4.9–11; 31.5.1.
77. AM 31.4.11; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 377.
78. AM 31.5.1.
79. This is implied by later events, cf. AM 31.5.3. See further Chapter 15.
80. On the possibility that several other groups may have also petitioned for asylum, cf. AM 31.4.2.
81. AM 31.4.12.
82. AM 31.4.12; cf. AM 31.9.3–4; Heather, *The Visigoths*, p. 46.
83. AM 31.4.12; 31.5.3.

84. AM 31.4.13.
85. AM 31.5.3.
86. AM 31.5.3.
87. AM 31.5.4.
88. AM 31.5.4.
89. AM 31.5.5.
90. AM 31.5.5.
91. AM 31.5.6.
92. AM 31.5.7.
93. AM 31.5.8.
94. The only specific date for the defeat is given by Jerome, *Chron.* s.a. 377. However, it is uncertain whether this is based on the actual battle or on when the news reached Valens and became common knowledge.
95. AM 31.5.9.
96. AM 31.5.9.
97. Opinion is divided as to the actual timing of the alliance. Before the Battle of Ad Salices (377 – see Chapter 15), Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West*, p. 177; after, Heather, *The Goths*, pp. 133–134, n. 6.
98. AM 31.6.1–2.
99. AM 31.6.2; Kulikowski, *Rome's Gothic Wars*, p. 135.
100. AM 31.6.2.
101. AM 31.6.3.
102. AM 31.6.3.
103. Heather, *The Goths*, p. 142.
104. AM 31.6.3.
105. AM 31.6.4.
106. Heather, *The Goths*, 1994, 142; Zos. 4.22; AM 31.6.4f.
107. AM 31.6.5–6.
108. AM 30.2.5; Asthianene and Belabitene, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 183.
109. PB 5.34.
110. Baynes, 'Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century', p. 641.
111. AM 31.4.1.
112. AM 30.2.5–6; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 184.
113. AM 30.2.6–8.
114. Bas. *Ep.* 237; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 258 and n. 281.
115. Bas. *Ep.* 231, 238, 247.
116. Soz. 7.2.5–6.
117. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 259.

Chapter 15

1. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, pp. 166, 201, n. 261.
2. Baynes, 'Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century', pp. 641–642.
3. *CAH*, 98.
4. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 200.
5. AM 31.7.1.
6. AM 31.7.3.
7. Zos. 4.24.3; cf. Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641*, p. 84.
8. See below: cf. Zos. 4.22.4.
9. See Chapter 11.
10. AM 31.7.4.
11. He probably supported the usurpation of Magnus Maximus in 383.
12. Although some historians date the revolt to 378, following Socrates (4.36.1) and Sozomen (6.37.15–38), who both date the revolt to when Valens attempted to leave

- Antioch to face the Goths. As Valens left in April 378 some authorities have dated the revolt to 378. However, this would leave no time for the intervening events prior to the Battle of Adrianople. As a result, the date proposed by Lenski (*Failure of Empire*, p. 208f.) has been used, although it should be noted that the earlier date of 376 for the end of the revolt, as proposed by Greatrex ('The Background and Aftermath of the Partition of Armenia in A.D. 387', p. 38, n. 20), is also viable.
13. On the history of the Saracens, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 203f. plus associated bibliography. On Mavia being Queen of the Tanûkhids, Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs*, p. 141. See also, Fisher, *Between Empires*, *passim*.
 14. For possible reasons concerning Ammianus' reticence about these events, see Woods, 'Maurus, Mavia, and Ammianus', pp. 325–328.
 15. Soz. 6.38; Ruf. 2.6; 11.6; Soc. 4.36; cf. Theod. 4.23.
 16. Implied at Soz. 6.38; Soc. 4.36; accepted by Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs*, p. 142.
 17. Christian, Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs*, p. 143; Pagan, Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 207; by implication, *CAH* 447.
 18. e.g. CTh.7.13.7 (2 June 375, Antioch).
 19. CTh.7.6.3 (9 August 377, Hierapolis).
 20. Fisher, *Between Empires*, *passim*.
 21. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 208.
 22. AM 27.10.4.
 23. AM 29.6.5.
 24. AM 30.1.18–21.
 25. Woods, 'Maurus, Mavia, and Ammianus', pp. 328–329.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 330.
 27. *Ibid.*, *passim*.
 28. For examples of Saracen tribes changing their allegiance, Tabari, 822, 834 referenced in Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 201. These include the Lakhm, centred around Hira, allied to Persia in third century, but by early fourth century allied to Rome; Ghassan, later allied to Byzantine Empire, in fourth century allied to Persia.
 29. On the extent of the revolt, e.g. Ruf. 1 1.6. On it being extended to Egypt, Lenski (*Failure of Empire*, 205) links the revolt to the account of attacks on monks on Mt. Sinai given in the *Relatio Ammanis*, but see also Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs*, p. 308f.
 30. On Julius, PLRE I, *Julius* 2, 481.
 31. Soz. 6.38.
 32. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 210.
 33. AM 37.7.1; cf. Eun. fr. 42 (Blockley); Oros. 7.34.6.
 34. Zos. 4.21.
 35. The evidence will be analyzed in the main narrative.
 36. Heather, *The Goths*, pp. 134, 142–144.
 37. The account here is based largely upon that given by Ammianus. Although his writing is influenced both by his bias and his use of literary *topoi*, it is the only detailed account we have and so has to be used, although with caution.
 38. AM 31.7.5; 31.7.7; Rolfe, III, p. 428, n. 1. On the problems of identifying the location, see Heather, *The Goths*, p. 144.
 39. cf. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, pp. 50–51.
 40. AM 31.7.5. It is sometimes suggested that Frigeridus did not even advance into Thrace, but this is contradicted by the later information that Gratian recalled Frigeridus to block the pass at Sulci: AM 31.9.1.
 41. AM 31.7.7–8.
 42. AM 31.7.10. It is possible that the Tervingi captured the heights, but as this is not mentioned by Ammianus, it has been assumed that they failed.
 43. AM 31.7.11.
 44. The *testudo* was a formation used with the shields raised at the front, top and sides to

- protect the troops from missiles. By this late date it may have changed slightly from earlier centuries when the legions were equipped with oblong shields.
45. AM 31.7.12; inferior numbers, AM 31.7.9.
 46. AM 31.7.12.
 47. AM 31.7.13–15.
 48. AM 31.7.16. Profuturus killed, Demandt, 'Magister Militum', p. 563.
 49. AM 31.8.1.
 50. *Cons. Const.* s.a. 378; Soc. 4.38.1: 'When the general came back beaten, the emperor reviled him sadly, and charged him with infirmity and cowardice' – Theod. 4.30.
 51. This analysis mirrors to a large degree modern scrutiny of the Battle of Jutland (1916). Here the Germans won a tactical victory since the British lost more vessels, but the British won a strategic victory, as from then to the end of the war the German navy was extremely reluctant to face the British again.
 52. AM 31.8.1.
 53. AM 31.8.2–3.
 54. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 357.
 55. AM 31.8.1; 31.8.4.
 56. AM 31.8.3. Saturninus was given 'temporary command of the cavalry'.
 57. AM 31.8.5.
 58. Heather, *The Goths*, 994, 144: AM 31.8.2 (late summer); 31.10.1 (winter); 31.8.4 (attacks repelled).
 59. AM 31.8.5.
 60. AM 31.8.5–6.
 61. AM 31.12.15: see Chapter 17.
 62. AM 31.8.9.
 63. The negative view of Frigeridus adopted by Lenski has here been discarded in favour of a more positive approach. The possibility that Frigeridus disobeyed Gratian's orders by not helping in Illyricum and withdrew to the Succi Pass without orders – plus his later replacement as commander being interpreted as him being 'relieved of duty' does not allow for the personal changes being made simply at the whim of the emperor, but as part of an overall policy that may not be supported by the sources. See Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 356f.
 64. AM 31.9.1.
 65. Implied by Ammianus, 31.9.2–3.
 66. AM 31.9.2–3.
 67. AM 31.9.4.
 68. Although the chronology is unclear, it is likely, given later events, that the battle with Farnobius took place late in 377.
 69. AM 31.10.21.
 70. AM 31.8.6.
 71. Jer. *Chron.* s.a.378; Ruf. 11.13.
 72. *Chron. Edes.* no. 33 (a.689 = AD 377/378).
 73. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 261.
 74. AM 31.11.2.

Chapter 16

1. AM 31.10.3.
2. 'Treaty', AM 31.10.1–2; attack, AM 31.10.4; Petulantes, *Not Dig. OC* V 10 = 160; Celtae, *Not Dig. OC* VII = 161. Note that in the *Notitia* both units are listed as being in Italy, demonstrating the limits of using the *Notitia* as a specific source for the army for periods before and after its composition.
3. AM 31.10.5; Priarius, 31.10.10.
4. AM 15.4.1f.

5. AM 31.10.6.
6. AM 31.10.11; date, Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 312.
7. The account is based on Ammianus, 31.10.8f.
8. On the problems surrounding the battle and its location, see Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 312f.
9. For details on the negative aspects of Gratian's decision, see esp. *ibid.*, p. 312f, plus associated bibliography.
10. For example, *CAH* 99.
11. AM 31.31.10.18f.; Zos. 4.22.4.
12. cf. Fisher, *Between Empires*, p. 74f.
13. Soc. 4.36.
14. Soz. 6.38.9; 6.38.5; Theod. 4.23.5; Theod. *Lect Epit.* 185; Theoph. am 5869; Ruf. 11.6; Soc. 4.34.4; Theod. 4.23.1.
15. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 208.
16. On the political ramifications of Arabic conversions, see Fisher, *Between Empires*, p. 39f.
17. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 208.
18. BP 5.35.
19. BP 5.37.
20. BP 5.37.
21. BP 5.38; cf. Baynes, 'Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century', p. 642.
22. Baynes, 'Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century', p. 642.
23. cf. *ibid.*, p. 642.
24. Demandt, 'Magister Militum', p. 563.
25. Date, Soc.4.38.
26. Soc 4.38; cf. Soz. 6.39.
27. Soc 4.38; Soz. 6.39.
28. Zos. 4.23.3–4; AM 31.12.1.
29. Zos. 4.22.1–3.
30. AM 31.11.1; Melanthias a village, Agathias 5.14.D; *Suid.* 102.
31. Theod. 4.33.
32. AM 30.10.2–3. See Chapter 13.
33. AM 31.11.1; Zos. 4.22.4. The exact circumstances surrounding Sebastianus' transfer to the East are unclear, largely because whereas Ammianus claims that Valens requested his presence in the East, Zosimus states that it was Sebastianus who wanted the transfer. The likelihood is that it was to both their liking that the transfer took place.
34. Demandt, 'Magister Militum', p. 563.
35. *Ibid.*
36. AM 31.11.2. Nice a town, cf. Soc. 2.37; 2.95; *It. Burdig.* P.569. It should be noted, however, that in some later sources the use of the word *poleis* (town) can refer to sites ranging from forts to cities. Although a later phenomenon, the usage may have precedents in the fourth century. See Sodini, 'The Transformation of Cities in Late Antiquity Within the Provinces of Macedonia and Epirus', p. 314.
37. MacDowall (*Adrianople AD 378*, p. 57) also has them at Dibaltum. Although the scene of a victory, it is uncertain that the victorious forces then established a 'permanent' camp at the site.
38. Zos. 4.23.1–4. The most famous exponent of the 'retrain and renew confidence' technique was probably Scipio Africanus during the Second Punic War in the third century BC, although the method is one often used throughout history.
39. AM 31.11.2; Zos. 4.23.1–3.
40. AM 31.11.5.
41. cf. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, p. 45f.
42. Zos. 4.23.6.
43. Ridley, *Zosimus*, p. 191, n. 69. On Ammianus, see below.

44. cf. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, p. 57.
45. Exaggerated claims, AM 31.12.1.
46. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 365.
47. AM 31.11.6; Richomeres and contents, 31.12.4–5.
48. cf. Williams and Friell, *Theodosius*, p. 17.
49. AM 31.11.6.
50. AM 31.11.6; cf. Soz. 9.5.
51. AM 31.11.6.

Chapter 17

1. AM 31.12.2. To be this precise the scouts had presumably learned of the plan from captured Gothic.
2. AM 31.12.2.
3. cf. Barbero, *The Day of the Barbarians*, p. 94; MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, p. 60.
4. AM 31.12.3. There is no information here stating that Valens had already reached Adrianople by this time. ‘The city’ appears to be Adrianople rather than Constantinople, as claimed by Rolfe (III, p. 463, n. 2).
5. AM 31.12.3.
6. cf. Barbero, *The Day of the Barbarians*, p. 93.
7. MacDowall (*Adrianople AD 378*, p. 60) believes that Valens had already reached Adrianople and carried on his march to the west before returning to the city and building the camp.
8. AM 31.12.4.
9. This can be compared to the enquiry set up to investigate Belisarius’ actions at the Battle of Callinicum in 531: Hughes, *Belisarius*, p. 64; Zach. 9.6.17; Joh. Mal. 466.
10. For the opposite viewpoint, see for example Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 115.
11. AM 31.12.1; 31.12.7.
12. Fritigern escaping into the countryside, Zos. 4.24; Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*, p. 244.
13. For further discussion of Valens’ motives, see MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, pp. 60–62.
14. Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 115.
15. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 365.
16. Theod. 4.32.
17. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 337.
18. cf. AM 31.12.4.
19. cf. Barbero, *The Day of the Barbarians*, p. 94.
20. AM 31.12.8.
21. AM 31.12.8–9.
22. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 332.
23. AM 31.12.9.
24. cf. Thompson, ‘The Visigoths from Fritigern to Euric’, pp. 106–107.
25. AM 31.12.9.
26. This can be compared to the large number of embassies exchanged between Valens and the Goths prior to the peace treaty of 370: AM 27.5.7; Them. *Or.* 10.133a; Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 132.
27. AM 31.12.10–11.
28. AM 31.12.10.
29. Burns, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 342, claims that the meeting between the two armies was a ‘surprise’ to both. Given the previous events, this seems extremely unlikely.
30. For example, MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, P. 68; cf. Runkel, *Die Schlacht bei Adrianople* (Berlin: 1903), cited by MacDowall.
31. cf Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 109; MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, p. 68.

32. AM 31.12.11.
33. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, pp. 68–69.
34. AM 31.12.12–13.
35. Williams and Friell, *Theodosius*, p. 18.
36. AM 31.12.12–13.
37. ‘Delaying tactics’, e.g. Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 116.
38. This can be compared to the first use of poison gas by the British in World War One, where the wind changed direction and blew the gas over friendly troops.
39. AM 31.12.3.
40. Using logistical reasoning, Delbrück calculated that the troops under Fritigern numbered 12,000–15,000 men: H. Delbrück, *History of the Art of War within the Framework of Political History: The Germans* Vol. 2 (Contributions in Military Studies: 1980), pp. 276–278, cited by Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 113.
41. AM 31.2.7; 31.2.17; Heather, *The Visigoths*, pp. 53–54.
42. Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 113; Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*, p. 50.
43. 20,000 Goths: Williams and Friell, *Theodosius*, pp. 81, 177, 179, 209, n. 32.
44. Elton, *Warfare in Roman Europe*, p. 67.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
46. Veg. 1.20.
47. On the Huns, see esp. Hughes, *Belisarius*, p. 37f.
48. Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 109.
49. For more detail on the identification of the named units, see the description of the battle which follows.
50. cf. Heather, *Goths and Romans*, pp. 146–147, referencing Hoffmann, *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer*, pp. 450–458.
51. Armenians under Barzimeres AM 31.8.9–10; Iberians under Bacurius AM 31.12.16; Saracens, ‘Celts’, Libyans and troops ‘from the Tigris’ (Assyrians) Them. *Or.* 15.189d; 16.207a; 34.2. See Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 364.
52. Eisenberg, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 114.
53. 25,000–30,000 Romans: Williams and Friell, *Theodosius*, pp. 81, 177, 179, 209, n. 32; 30,000–40,000 Romans, Hoffmann, *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer*, p. 444, n. 138 (referenced in Heather, *Goths and Romans*, p. 147); Austin, ‘Ammianus’ Account of the Adrianople Campaign’, p. 82.
54. See account below.
55. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, p. 69; mention of a ‘reserve’, AM 31.13.9.
56. Ammianus 31.12.11–12; cf. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, pp. 69–71.
57. AM 31.13.2 describes the left wing as reaching the laager, implying that the Goths had deployed before the laager and been pushed back: cf. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, p. 71.
58. This can be compared with Sozomen, who simply states that ‘He [Valens] had the rashness to attack them [the Goths] before he had arranged his own legions in proper order’: Soz. 6.40.
59. cf. MacDowall, *Adrianople AD 378*, p. 73.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
61. Cavalry drifting to the left, *ibid.*, p. 73. For further analysis, see below.
62. e.g. *Ibid.*, p. 73; Burns, ‘The Battle of Adrianople’, p. 343.
63. AM 31.13.1.
64. AM 31.13.1.
65. AM 31.13.1.
66. AM 31.12.2.
67. AM 31.12.2.
68. ‘His cavalry was dispersed, his infantry compelled to retreat’; Soz. 6.40: ‘Lamentable war in Thrace, in which the Roman legions, lacking the protection of horse, were

surrounded by the Goths and slaughtered to extinction' – Jer. Chron. s.a. 379. 'When the cavalry revolted and refused to engage, the infantry were surrounded by the barbarians, and completely destroyed in a body' – Soc. 4.38.

69. AM 31.12.2.
70. AM 31.12.11.
71. AM 31.13.11; 31.13.18.
72. AM 31.13.18.
73. AM 31.12.8.
74. AM 31.13.8. Note that 'auxilia' was originally translated as 'foreign auxilia', although there is no Latin word for 'foreign' in the original. The 'auxilia' here are units of the 'Auxilia Palatina', one the elite units of the emperor's *comitatus*.
75. AM 31.12.9.
76. AM 31.12.12; cf. 'Others affirm that having put off his imperial robe he ran into the midst of the main body of infantry; and that among these it is said the emperor fell, but could not be distinguished' – Soc. 4.38.
77. AM 31.12.14; cf. 'Some have asserted that he was burnt to death in a village whither he had retired, which the barbarians assaulted and set on fire' – Soc. 4.38: 'The emperor Valens himself, when wounded by an arrow, fled and because of the severe pain often almost fell from his horse, was carried off to a certain farm cottage, and after being pursued there by the barbarians and the house set on fire, he did not even obtain burial' – Jer. Chron. s.a. 379.

Aftermath and Conclusion

1. Williams and Friell's discussion concerning the inevitability of Gratian's nominee becoming emperor (*Theodosius*, pp. 20–22) is interesting but possibly flawed. It assumes that whoever was given the military command would also be given – or take by force – the rule of the East. Although this is a logical step, made in the context of the third-century crisis, it is uncertain whether Theodosius would have 'rebelled' against Gratian's rule and set up on his own in opposition to his patron.
2. *Cons. Const.* s.a. 379.
3. *Cons. Const.* s.a. 382.
4. Kulikowski, *Rome's Gothic Wars*, pp. 144–145.
5. Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, p. 367.
6. Williams and Friell, *Theodosius*, pp. 179–180.
7. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, p. 139.
8. *Ibid.*

Appendix

1. The description here mainly follows Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 267f.
2. AM 27.1.1.
3. AM 27.1.2.
4. AM 27.2.1.
5. AM 27.2.1.
6. AM 27.2.1.
7. AM 27.2.1.
8. AM 27.2.2.
9. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome*, p. 269.

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